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ABSTRACT

This monograph contains five studies of participation in adult education. The first paper, "Participation in Organised Adult Education: A Review of the Literature" by R. J. Sumner, examines a selection of studies conducted in England, the United States, and Australia. Chris Duke's paper which is entitled "Participation Research," discusses patterns of participation in adult education in Australia and the implications for educational policy. The third paper, "Barriers to Participation in Adult Education" by Kjell Rubenson, examines situational, dispositional, and institutional barriers to participation in education and proposes a theoretical framework for analyzing barriers. Doug MacLean's paper, "Theories and Models of Participation in Adult Education," addresses the issue of the lack of attention to the role of theory in adult education and analyzes various models for participation in adult education that have been proposed by Boshier, McClusky, Cross, and Darkenwald and Merriam. The final paper, "Adult Education Participation on the North Coast of New South Wales" by R. J. Prater, studies involvement in adult education in three types of Australian communities. (MN)

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The Australian National University Centre for Continuing Education

Canberra Papers in Continuing Education New Series 5 Participation Research

Edited by CHRIS DUKE

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This volume of the Canberra Papers in Continuing Education - New Series number 5 - differs from earlier volumes in being devoted to a single theme: participation in adult education. Four of the five papers were prepared in Australia, one of them by a New Zealander on leave at the Australian National University and taking an international view of theories and models of adult education participation. The fifth paper is by the Swedish scholar and professor Kjell Rubenson, written while he occupied a Chair of Adult Education at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, in Canada. This paper was prepared as a confidential discussion paper for the Canadian Ministry of Labour's Skill Development Leave Task Force, which commissioned a large number of such papers as preparation for its September 1983 two-volume report, Learning a Living in Canada. Rubenson's paper is thus written first in time among the five in this volume, being prepared in March 1983. It has a particular interest for what it conveys to Australian readers of the underlying Swedish social philosophy as well as the Canadian context and circumstances, which are somewhat analogous to those of Australia. Rubenson stresses social equity issues as well as seeking rapprochement between the humanistic philosophy underpinning lifelong education and the human capital thinking behind the skill development movement.

The first paper published here, by R.J. Sumner of the South Australian College of Advanced Education, was drafted later in the same year. It reviews international literature on participation in adult education and concludes by examining Australian studies in this context and suggesting an area of particular importance for further research: participants' perception of the roles of adult education agencies and a consequent unintended narrowing effect on participation. Sumner's and Rubenson's papers have an obvious compatibility. Both were heavily referred to in the short paper prepared by Duke for the first Australian National Summer School in Adult Education, which was held at the University of New England in 1984.

The last two papers in this volume were prepared during 1984 specifically for this publication, although Prater's was a by-product of his recently completed research thesis. MacLean offers a very thorough critical study of major theories and models of participation, concluding with a persuasive exploration of the possible relevance to the subject in these times of Catastrophe Theory. Prater, in a carefully researched quantitative study of a sample of the population of the North Coast of New South Wales, demonstrates that it is possible in Australia to take participation research into the general community beyond the population of class-goers. His paper in a sense provides one practical reponse to the call for good, relevant Australian research in this field. While it is strong methodologically and quantitatively (readers with technical interests are advised to write to Prater or consult his thesis at the University of New England rather than rely on the edited and simplified version as published here), it also demonstrates that good quantitative research can also contribute to understanding in a qualitative way, and can throw up practical suggestions for policy and provision as well as, naturally, indicating areas for further research.

Chris Duke March 1985

PARTICIPATION IN ORGANISED ADULT EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

R.J. Sumner

Introduction

Considerable recent empirical research on adult education has centred on the phenomenon of student participation. Conclusions suggest that its emphasis has changed from remedial education for the educationally underprivileged to leisure enrichment of the middle classes.

Studies have been generally designed to elicit participant characteristics, not to explain participatory behaviour. To this end, clientele analyses have provided descriptions of participation trends and profiles of participants, derived from such information as sex, age, marital status, occupation and education. Indicators of participation are complex, but it is significant that by far the majority of adult education students are those who have high educational achievement. Previous education, occupation and income - three often-used determinants of social class - consistently indicate that participants are drawn from middle class groups. In fact, there is a considerable degree of consistency relating to participant characteristics in reported research over recent years.

Empirical research studies thus far conducted into adult education participation and non-participation fall broadly into two major groups -

(i) Social, cultural and demographic characteristics of participants at one particular institution or agency, or at different institutions or agencies to determine differential characteristics.

(ii) Comparative studies of participants and non-participants, to identify the differences between them.

Comparatively few Australian studies have been reported on aspects of participation in adult education - a situation different from that in England and the United States of America.

The following review of adult education research comprises a selection of studies conducted in England, the United States of America and Australia. Emphasis in the review has been placed on surveys - with no attempt being made to review critical literature.

Overseas Participant/Non-Participant Studies

One of the most extensive overseas studies of characteristics of adult education participants compared with the general population was undertaken in the United States of America by Johnstone and Rivera in 1965. In this study, the educational activities of members of some 62,000 households in two middle-sized American cities were surveyed. Among their conclusions, the authors provided a profile of the "typical" adult education student. They saw this person as being

> ...just as often a woman as a man, is typically under forty, has completed high school or better, enjoys an above average income, works full-time and most often in a white collar occupation, is typically white and Protestant,is married and a parent, lives in an urbanized area but more likely in a suburb than in a large city...[1]

Although there are difficulties in distinguishing between groups as "blue" and "white collar"[2], Johnstone and Rivera's profile of a typical adult education participant is clear.

Johnstone and Rivera further isolated differences in participation. For example, men tended to be over-represented in "vocational" and specifically "agricultural" categories, while women were over-represented in "family life", "recreation" and "religious" categories. Certain subjects were also age-dominated. For example, half the enrollees in vocational or "home and family" subjects were under 35 years, whereas in subjects relating to public affairs or religion, people tended to be fifty-five years or over. All spheres of study tended to have persons of above average education. In fact, it was found that participation in adult education was affected by formal schooling as much as any type of social behaviour.

At the same time, though, substantial differences in participation were related to occupation and family income. The rate of participation among persons in white collar occupations was almost twice that of blue collar workers, and participation increased upward through the income scales.

The results of this very large study focus attention on one of the continuing problems facing adult education agencies, namely, the appeal of their courses to the middle class and lack of appeal to the lower socio-economic groups. Many studies, such as the 1978 Survey of the National Centre for Educational Statistics in the USA, reinforce this as a current problem for adult education.[3]

Reasons for this situation are varied, but include the important issue of middle class dominance of adult education agencies' curricula and the consequent lack of involvement of the working class voices in adult education programme development. Furthermore, the distaste for educational activities that some working class people have developed as a result of compulsory schooling, where they have tended to enjoy less success and acceptance than their middle class counterparts, may also have influenced participation decisions.

Johnstone and Rivera's report which has more recently been further verified[4] laid the basis for further investigations of the audiences

attracted to adult education agencies. Boshier (1970), whose report on the clientele enrolled in liberal non-credit adult education at three New Zealand adult education institutions (a High School, Evening Institute and Workers' Educational Association [WEA]), attempted to define characteristics of participants and non-participants in terms of age, sex, race, socio-economic status, place of residence, education and occupation.[5]

Adult education participants were younger than non-participants, with considerable age variation occurring within the three institutions. While the New Zealand population was found to be of almost equal sexual distribution, nearly 75% of participants were women. This result was consistent with many previous (and subsequent) investigations into the area of liberal non-credit adult education where, typically, female participation is greater than that of males.

Reasons for this situation would probably have included the nature of the courses offered and also the fact that many women who were house-bound during the day viewed adult education as a means of perhaps removing them from the confines of their suburban homes, and/or helping them prepare for a return to the labour force.

Boshier found that Maoris were vastly under-represented, their cultural background and low economic status, together with being disadvantaged at all educational levels, having affected educational achievment and thus aided in fostering negative attitudes to adult education.

Occupation was seen as a correlate of participation. Blue collar workers were the majority of the workforce and were found to be less inclined to participate in the type of adult education programme offered by the institutions studied. Participation was also shown to be related to the adult's educational standard.

Prominent in the results was the fact that the institutions attracted what Boshier described as a socio-economic elite, which he found to be in accord with British and American findings. Non-participants tended to be aged people, Maoris, blue collar workers and people with no formal educational qualifications.

A similar study, but one in which participants at only one institution were considered, was conducted by Buttedahl and Verner (1965), among participants in an evening programme offered by the University of British Columbia.[6] In this programme, both discussion groups and classes with the same general liberal arts content were offered.

Typically, those enrolled in classes were younger mainly female, and had completed at least high school (12 years), with a high percentage of these being university graduates. Further most were employed in professional or clerical work, and had lived in the metropolitan area for 5 years or more.

The discussion groups attracted a larger percentage of married people who tended to be older (the median age being 41 years compared to 35 years in the classes) and who had been residents in the area for a longer period of time. Most had completed at least high school (12 years) and some were University graduates.

Reasons for such differences were not made clear in the study, however, the description and presentation of the programme content seemed to hold greater appeal for the more highly educated groups thus appealing to a particular kind of participant.

Douglah and Moss (1968) investigated the specific effect of education background as a single predictor of participation in a Wisconsin study[7]. Comparison between adults of high and low educational achievement showed that the relationship between previous education and adult participation was generally positive, but there were some variations within educational levels (low education referred to less than 12 years, higher education referred to 12 or more years of formal schooling). The results indicated that those who had experienced low education tended to participate most during middle age, whereas people with higher education usually became involved in early adulthood and maintained an interest well into middle age.

Except for age, employment status, income and family status, there seemed to be no significant differences between the two educational levels. The researchers thus concluded that education in itself did not necessarily affect participation, but in terms of socio-economic status, of which educational achievement is a part, those of higher achievement tend to be more likely to participate. In fact, it can be argued that the more education people have, the more interested they are in furthering their education and thus they are most likely to participate in adult education. Hence, adult education can be viewed as helping widen the educational gap between various groups in society, rather than narrowing this gap.

Dickinson (1971) claimed that research into adult education participation was largely concerned with socio-economic status and psycho-social characteristics, and that while education seemed to be the most significant single factor affecting participation, very little had been done to explore the implications of the education characteristics of the participant relative to his family and their educational achievement[8]. Using a model designed by Essert and Spence, he found that participation was strongly related to high achievement in formal education. A positive correlation was also found between the educational achievement of wives and the likelihood of participation in adult education by "male household heads", so that in most cases it could be said that the respondent's own education was not as relevant to his participation as that of his wife. Dickinson concluded that, overall, the number of years of education completed by the respondent's wife (as an indication of the kind of education in the family unit), had the greatest positive influence on participation in adult education.

A study involving sophisticated statistical analysis conducted by Anderson and Darkenwald (1974) revealed that participants' formal prior educational attainment exerted a significant influence on adult educational participation relatively independent of other components of socio-economic status[9]. Again the better educated adults seek and gain more educational experience. Such adults tend to be members of the middle class.

In 1971, Luckham reported on a study conducted in two north-west towns in England for the Public Libraries and Adult Education Committee for the North West. He found that most adult students studied subjects connected with employment[10]. This finding is consistent with other reported research of similar focus. Importantly, lower socio-economic groups, when they participate in adult education, tend to opt for more utilitarian studies. Liberal adult education appears to be valued much less highly among these people.

In Luckham's study, more men were involved in vocational subjects than were involved in WEA and University extra-mural non-vocational adult courses. Skilled and semi-skilled workers were scarcely reached by liberal adult education, but of those workers who did participate, a high proportion contended with awkward shift work to enable them to attend classes. (This was a problem faced by the WEA/University Tutorial Class Movement in England and Australia, particularly in its early years[11]).

The prevalence of office bearers of voluntary organisations, general awareness of current and world affairs (revealed through questions regarding reading habits), and interest associated with local affairs, created the impression that participants tended to be those who were positively oriented towards education and were from particular social groups. These characteristics implied that motivation to participate was derived from the desire for more education and this tended to occur with those whose early education experience was high.

To summarise so far - adult education draws disproportionate numbers of participants from the middle and upper socio-economic groups. These people are well educated and tend to be "young" (i.e. less than 55 years of age). Prior education remains the most influential determinant of participation, which can also be positively correlated to occupational status.

Brennan and McDowell (1969) found that feelings of social or educational inadequacy had a strong influence on lack of attendance in adult educational courses[12]. From information about participants (including factors encouraging participation) and non-participants, it was concluded that students were predominantly from skilled, semi-professional and professional groups within the community, with the largest proportion being teachers. The most common reason given for non-attendance was "too old" (20% of the 45 to 55 year age group and 27% of the 65 years and over group), followed by "social inferiority". In an Iowa study reported by Hamilton (1976), age ("being too old"), was seen by many as a barrier to participation[13].

Knox and Videbeck (1963) in an American study, compared characteristics of participants at various institutions and agencies for further education with non-participants[14]. Among their findings, they reported that the apparent relationship between age and participation suggested by other investigations occurred because people in "status configurations" (determined by status level of occupation, family, income, education and dwelling), were unequally distributed along the adult age-range. That is, certain types of people were more likely to participate regardless of age. Participation was thus determined more, for example, by life pattern and education experience, than simply age.

This survey indicated that participation increased in early young adulthood and decreased towards the end of young adulthood, rather than in middle or old age. The researchers were able to discover no significant differences between the characteristics of male and female participants. However, a number of differences were found in relation to community size and place of residence, and participation. For the population in the 34-49 year age range, in middle socio-economic status groups, for example, it was found that in communities of 2,500 people and less, participation was less frequent than for residents of similar status and age in larger towns and cities. Thus, age and community size were seen as significant indicators of opportunities to participate.

While many studies claimed a strong relationship between age and participation, Johnstone and Rivera (1965) also found that position in the life-cycle, particularly parenthood, affected participation rates. For example, whereas the rates of study were lower among mothers compared to non-mothers, the reverse was true of fathers and non-fathers. A reason for this situation, highlighted by the researchers, could be the heavier financial obligations which are put on males in the traditional nuclear family and the consequent feelings of need for the acquisition of skills to enhance income.

Knox and Videbeck concluded that by classifying adults into "status configurations", the apparent relationship between age and participation was eliminated. That is, participation patterns were indicative of interactions between the individual and the environment, and participation was increasingly seen as a social relationship relating to the role of the individual as a worker, a citizen and a family member.

The significant point of the survey is the implication that changing social patterns, increased affluence and a different education experience, have affected the participation of people in younger age groups, whereas in the middle-aged and the older age groups a relative increase in participation has not been evidenced.

A study undertaken by Burgess (1971) in America, while specifically designed to test the hypothesis that "reasons given for participation will factor into 8 groups", highlighted some relevant points on the nature of adult education participation[15]. Participants included in this study were metropolitan residents who were involved in an educational group activity planned for part-time adult students.

The people involved seemed to be similar to the typical adult-education student described by Johnstone and Rivera in Volunteers for Learning. There was an approximately even distribution of men and women who had completed more formal education than the average adult. They tended to be employed in "white collar" occupations and had a higher than average income. They were also younger, on average, than the general population. Furthermore, Burgess found that generally those who had been involved in higher levels of education were more motivated to extend their education experience through adult education.

Hutchinson (1974) undertook a questionnaire analysis of students enrolled at 16 community colleges in Leicestershire[16]. These are multi-purpose institutions used, for example, for youth centres, concerts, lectures,

exhibitions and holiday play centres. Data were collected on student characteristics and reasons for participation in the courses.

Results revealed that educational backgrounds reflected a high proportion (relative to national statistics) of participants who had been involved in higher education. Some of the colleges offered largely leisure and recreational courses, and tended not to attract or reach the educationally or socially deprived. In this study, occupations were classified as manual, non-manual and partly-skilled manual. It was found that the proportion of male students who were manual workers out-numbered the non-manual workers two to one, and about one-fifth of the female participants were partly-skilled. Students offered their motives for enrolling in terms of utility, physical fitness, sociability, learning (general and specific) and general interest.

A study exploring a somewhat different aspect of adult education was made by Luckham (1972) who considered that characteristics of non-typical non-participants and participants may be important in evaluating factors deterring participation[17]. Since adult education has tended to be a norm in higher status, occupational and education groups, while at the other socio-economic extreme, participation is the exception rather than the rule, a survey of students from Chester and Eccles was conducted to determine characteristics of participants and non-participants. Only nine of 1,333 participants could be considered non-typical participants. These were unskilled manual workers who had different interests, reading and leisure activities from their peers. In comparison, non-typical non-participants were described as 46 year old males who had left school at 19 years or later: some had awkward working hours, senior administrative posts, young families, and had little time for other pursuits.

Booth (1961) had earlier studied participant and non-participant characteristics in an endeavour to ascertain which characteristics occurred most frequently amongst non-participants[18]. Major areas considered were age, education, social status, sex, residence and racial origin.

Results suggested that a non-participant would be likely to be over 45 years, with less than high school education, and would be classed in a lower status occupation, or be unemployed. Some indication was given that non-participants would be likely to be females regardless of education, would be rural rather than urban residents and more frequently non-white. Interestingly in relation to race, Okes (1976) has argued from results of a study conducted in America, that black and white high school dropouts are equally likely non-participants[19].

Overseas research on participation and non-participation in adult education programmes clearly shows that participants are characteristically from the higher socio-economic groups within society, enjoy high status occupations and have experienced generally high levels of prior education[20].

Australian Participant/Non-Participant Studies

To date, there have been few reported Australian studies on the question of participation in non-vocational adult education. However, in those that have been reported, results tend to be comparable with overseas findings,

with such aspects as social, cultural and personal influences affecting participation.

In a study of participants involved in three year non-vocational courses at Sydney University, Allsop (1966) found a general youth bias, where almost half the enrollees were under 30 years of age and 75% were under 40 years of age[21]. Considered in conjunction with prior education, the implicationwas that these people had experienced a longer attendance at secondary school. More than 70% of the women and 90% of the men were engaged in paid employment, with 37% of these being considered as professionals. Of this group, teachers comprised one-third, followed closely by engineers. About half the women were engaged in clerical work, with 42% being private secretaries.

Allsop concluded that professional, technical and skilled workers were strongly represented in adult education classes, while semi-skilled and unskilled workers were not attracted.

In a comparative analysis, Allsop (1970) found that first-time enrollers at metropolitan classes of Sydney University Department of Adult Education reflected, in part, changing patterns of formal education[22]. For example a significant number enrolled in classes after having completed some tertiary education. Furthermore, Allsop discovered that there has been an increase in the number of young females participating.

Durston (1970) considered some characteristics of participants who had attended 29 residential, non-credit schools on campus at the University of New England[23].

More than half of the respondents were less than 41 years of age, with 10% being less than 20 years or older than 60 years of age. Almost 65% had experienced formal education of some kind following secondary schooling. Participants were overwhelmingly males and from professional occupations.

These results tend further to support general overseas finding of studies of characteristics of participants in adult education.

In a further paper, Durston summarised some findings from studies including those by McAughtree (1948), Dunton (1960), Moroney (1960) and Shipp (1964)[24]. The general conclusions from these studies suggested that adult education appealed to those who had the advantage of a good basic education, who were interested and stimulated in other ideas and cultures, and who were white collar, middle class people.

Personal needs are strongly influenced by social class values. Thus it is not surprising to find, in research studies, repeated statements suggesting the importance of formal education, (a significant factor in the determination of socio-economic status) as a major indicator of participation.

A most interesting survey conducted by Duke and Butterfield (1971) was directed at discovering students' perceptions of the Australian National University's Centre for Continuing Education[25]. Further, the researchers intended to gain information on students, particularly their education, socio-economic standing and life style, and to discover which societal groups were under-represented in courses.

The findings largely supported other research studies, in so far as participants were drawn from the higher social strata in terms of occupational, and educational status.

In a study, financially supported by the Technical and Further Education Council (TAFEC), Sumner and Kerkham (1976) investigated the characteristics of students at a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) College in South Australia[26]. In addition, non-participant representatives from the College's local community were surveyed to isolate awareness of adult education provision and attitudes to participation.

Results indicated that the College attracted students from very diverse geographic locations. Further, its student population traversed many occupational groups ranging from the unemployed through to the unskilled and thence professional and managerial.

Young people provided the great bulk of the enrolment, with the vocationally-oriented schools of Business Studies and Technical Studies being dominated by males while courses in the School of General Studies, which provided courses of a general adult education nature, were dominated by women. Older people, migrants and some occupational groups were under-represented.

A very high percentage of participants in the School of General Studies had experienced post-secondary or tertiary education as had other adult members of their households. Women consistently out-numbered men in all age groups and in all course classifications in the School.

Although the largest group of women overall were housewives, it was notable that their spouses were mainly classified under professional and managerial/executive occupations. Thus, the commonly assumed indicators of social class, namely education and occupation, showed that the participants in the School of General Studies of the College were from the middle class.

A subsequent TAFEC funded study was carried out by Finnegan in South Australia and reported in 1977. In her extensive investigation, Finnegan reported that the profile of an adult education participant in South Australia in the mid-1970s was as follows:

> The person is more likely to be female rather than male, is probably under thirty-six years of age and is employed. She has reached a high level of schooling and is probably middle-class[27].

Again, there is consistency among results on the characteristics of participants in organised adult education activities. These results are further supported in a study undertaken in five Evening Colleges in Sydney in 1978[28]. Here students were largely female, under 35 years of age, had a good educational background and were middle class.

The South Australian WEA surveyed its Autumn Class enrolments in 1979 and reported that women were dominant among students[29]. Furthermore, people less than 35 years of age and from occupations characteristically middle class were in a majority among participants.

The results of Australian and overseas studies into the characteristics of participants in adult education are largely consistent. Extensive prior formal education, characteristic of the education experience of middle and upper socio-economic groups, emerges as an influential determinant of participation.

Conclusion

Most studies reviewed in this paper have been concerned with describing participant profiles, and indicating the differences which exist between them and the non-participant population. Conclusions show that organised non-vocational adult education consistently attracts people from the higher socio-economic groups, more particularly the urban middle class.

Obviously the adult education agencies fulfil important roles within the communities they serve simply by providing courses which allow, for example, personal enrichment or vocational advancement.

However, there is an important aspect which has been largely neglected in research studies. Consideration of participant perceptions of the role of these agencies, and of their expectations of these agencies, has generally been absent. It is a rare study which critically appraises what could certainly be called the "popular" interpretations of the roles of the agencies and the needs of their associated communities.

What seems to be happening is that the activities of the participants, and the study of them, is leading to a narrower definition of the typical attender, and therefore a narrower concept of community needs. In other words, the clientele the agencies attract is defining the role of the agencies in their own terms, and the minority groups which might once have been served appear to be excluded from these considerations.

Consideration of participant and non-participant perceptions of the role of these agencies could lead to a broadening of the definition of a typical attender. Even within the framework of middle class hegemony, such increased breadth could occur. This would then see more adequate provision being made for all social classes and, in particular, the working class.

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PARTICIPATION RESEARCH*

Chris Duke

Scope of this paper

"Participation" suggests three areas of inquiry in adult education. One - the main focus of this paper - is research into the participation of individuals, groups or classes in organised adult education programmes. Some such studies concentrate on participation in the programmes of a particular agency, usually with various internal comparisons and perhaps comparison with the nature of participation in other agencies' programmes. Others, usually the more significant, consider participants by reference to the nature of the whole population in that country or region, and so make a comparison between who does and who does not join adult education programmes. Many studies seek to go beyond the fact of (non-)participation to attempt to identify or deduce reasons for participation; thus participation research is much involved in matters of motivation.

A second area is research into the processes whereby participation may or may not occur especially at the level of the particular course or class. Research on participation in this sense touches on methods of teaching and managing (or facilitating, or being a resource person, etc.) in the agency and especially the classroom. It stresses the importance of understanding, commitment and activity for effective learning. The Centre for Continuing Education at the Australian National University has tended to concentrate on research, especially applied and action research, in this area, linking it with the principles of participative (as distinct from representative) industrial democracy. It would be argued there that non-participation in adult education programmes is in part a function of a non-participative style of management and teaching within these programmes.

The third area, promoted mainly by the International Council for Adult Education, is participatory research (PR) itself, as distinct from research into participation. This is a philosophy and methodology of research which treats the objects of research as partners and actors, by and for whom the research is planned, designed, implemented and used. It is a reaction to the sometimes trivial, sometimes useless, sometimes dehumanising or demeaning, usually quantitative, methods of much empirical social science inquiry. It may be argued that while it is quite distinct from participation research, it too provides part of the answer to "the problem of non-participation": if potential students were treated through PR as co-determiners of their learning needs and the means of meeting them, rather than as potential agency clients, the perception of agencies on the part of non-participating groups and classes might change.

"Adults as learners" can refer to two quite distinct fields of inquiry, considered in terms of the organisation and institutions of education. "Participation" indeed implies joining an identifiable educational activity. We should distinguish firmly between learning and education, for reasons indicated below. The main adult education participation research

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* Paper prepared for First National Summer School in Adult Education, UNE, 1984 on programme planning, "Working with Adults as Learners".

tradition relates to non-vocational, non-credit, programmes but there is a burgeoning literature nowadays also on adults' participation in formal, credit-earning, further and higher education. This may or may not interest adult educators, depending on their institutional base and general outlook, but it does suggest common questions for inquiry in both settings, and it brings more sharply to attention the question whether adult education is a sub-system of regular education or a distinct field with different sociological features.

Some key issues raised

Research into the participation of adults in adult education programmes may be, or appear, somewhat mundane, as indeed some descriptive institutional studies are. It does however raise very significant questions about the nature and social functions of adult education: does adult education reduce inequity - or widen the gap between the socially and educationally advantaged and disadvantaged - or is it irrelevant to social structure, equity and justice?

If adult education and adult learning are merged and confused to become interchangeable in people's minds, then participation studies may call attention to one important principle that can be sacrificed at the altar of another: it is a healthy antidote to educators' conceit to remind ourselves that most adults' learning occurs without aid of any kind of deliberate education; but not satisfactory in the process to ignore the unequal access which different social groups and classes have to adult education as a public good.

To this set of questions about social class and equity may be added other sets of questions: about institutional change where research indicates that agencies create barriers to access; and about the way agencies present themselves so as to be sensitive to the doubts potential students may feel in considering whether to enrol. There is thus a spectrum of issues from the broad socio-political to the details of agency behaviour to take account of what is known of individuals' motivations within the "enrolment economy".

A recent trend that bears consideration in the context of participation research is towards bifurcation of the clientele of many adult education agencies. As fees rise towards "full-cost recovery", openly recruiting, unsubsidised courses become accessible only to the relatively affluent. Meanwhile the number of specially funded courses for identified "disadvantaged groups" increases. Such a trend raises questions about the role of the agency and the effects of a degree of homogenisation into distinct sub-programmes on the effect of the programme as a whole.

Main research findings

The groundwork for this paper has been done by R.J. Sumner in the previous paper, "Participation in organised adult education: a review of the literature". Sumner cites seventeen overseas and nine Australian studies. He finds a shift from remedial education for the educationally under-privileged to leisure enrichment for the middle classes. Generally studies have sought to elicit participant characteristics (socio-economic status,

age, sex, occupation, marital status etc.) rather than explain participatory behaviour. They consistently show that most adult students are middle class persons of high educational achievement. Participation in adult education as affected by formal schooling as much as any type of behaviour. Typically, in liberal, non-vocational programmes, women's participation outranks men's. Study of participation at different ages and and with different educational backgrounds and current socio-economic status(ses) suggests that 'adult education can be viewed as helping widen the educational gap between various groups in society, rather than narrowing this gap. Importantly, lower socio-economic groups, when they participate in adult education, tend to opt more for utilitarian studies. Liberal adult education appears to be valued much less highly among these people. Participants also tend to be relatively young (which tends to correlate positively with higher initial education as well as occupational status). Some studies develop this into consideration of life-cycle position, with participation seen as a social relationship relating to the role of the individual as a worker, a citizen and a family member'.

Whereas there have been many participation studies in North America and Britain, Sumner remarks that there are few Australian studies reported, but that those that exist tend to confirm overseas findings: the results of Australian and overseas studies into the characteristics of participants in adult education are largely consistent. Extensive prior formal education, characteristic of the education experienc of middle and upper socio-economic groups, emerges as an influential determinant of participation. Reasons for this situation include, importantly, middle class domination of adult agencies' curricular, also the distaste for educational activities of some working class people deriving from unsatisfactory experiences of compulsory schooling. Sumner suggests that the clienteles of adult education agencies tend to define down the agencies more narrowly in their own terms, making them still less attractive to others outside this cultural and social group.

Some studies indicate total participation in adult education within the population, although comparisons must be treated with caution in terms of the definition and administrative boundaries set for adult education in each case. Thus a recent U.S.A. report (Kay, 1983) indicates a national participation rate of 13% (21 millions adults) for May 1981 (compared with 18 million three years earlier). A Norwegian study (Nordhaug) finds the comparable figure (participation among adults) to be about 25%, after allowing for "multiparticipants", or double-counting. Both studies echo the characteristic findings for participants reported above. The Norwegian study highlights the failure of the 1977 Adult Education Act to achieve the goal of social equality in Norway. Participants are generally more educated formally, participate more frequently in other organised activities, and have more self-confidence. The employed participate more than the unemployed; those aged 30-39 are the most active participants, proportionately. While there is a considerable majority of women in general adult education courses there is an even more considerable majority of men in work-related adult education. Thus social inequality has increased despite public equalisation objectives and the same tendency appears to be present with regard to distribution of adult education by gender. Nordhaug concludes that the most important focus of research in the eighties will be to assist in reversing this tendency in order to realise the legal obligation of equal opportunity in adult education.

Methodological considerations and possible future research needs

Roger Boshier has done more than any other single researcher to systematise and raise the quality of participation research of a quantitative kind (see for example Boshier & Collins, 1983, and references to earlier work therein). Boshier has concentrated on developing and having adopted a standard measure, the Education Participation Scale (EPS). This is intended to foster the systematisation of participation research which might throw light upon motives for participation and non-participation. Boshier is critical of the method (or access to the method) in the major and oft-cited studies of Johnstone and Rivera (1965) and Houle (1963). He calls attention to the wastefulness of many one-off studies and the absence of secondary analyses of extant data. The Boshier and Collins 1983 study in fact reports on secondary analysis of 12,191 adult learners (5,249 in credit, the rest in non-credit, classes). Boshier notes two branches of research having a motivational orientation: a dominant tradition which investigates "antecedents", seen as variables "causing" participation (age, sex, SES etc.); and a smaller branch of research into the consequents of participation. He calls for more research of the latter kind, as well as longitudinal studies of participant motivation and other kinds of explorations.

While the work of Boshier, in particular, has greatly strengthened the methodological basis of quantitative participation research, many studies of participation continue to re-invent the wheel and do no more than indicate the same patterns of unequal participation as summaries by Sumner. Most of the recent work has done little to add to our knowledge, In effect it has merely quantified and filled in the details of what has proved the Achilles heel of adult education in the western (especially originally British) tradition from the foundation of the W.E.A. and indeed before that at least to the Mechanics' Institutes: the mismatch between the social-democratic intentions of adult education as expressed by Mansbridge, Tawney and others, and the reality that most participants have been drawn, most of the time, from the middle classes. Adult education, intended to redistribute educational opportunity and equalise as between different social groups, has tended to be a consumption item, a life-style expression of those who already have. Even where working class people have been participants there is a concern: that western style adult education serves as a means for upwardly mobile individuals to acquire the cultural norms, and in some areas of adult education the formal qualifications, to move into the white collar or middle classes.

A recent article by Rockhill (1982) addresses the question of methodology in researching participation. It calls for more qualitative research, to gain more insight into what lies behind the already well established correlation between participation and education. She finds participation to be one of the most frequently researched topics in adult education, mostly using survey techniques to identify student and potantial student characteristics and preferences. She quotes Cross in criticism of the value of more such work: rather than knowing a great deal about adults' learning interests it is probably more accurate to say that we know quite a bit about a rather limited aspect of adult learners' motivations and interests. It is only a slight variation to say that what we have are thirty variations of the same study. (Cross, 1979, 130-34) Rockhill finds participation research, despite some qualitative forays, to be locked

firmly into the quantitative tradition. It suffers, in consequence, from loss of human perspective; from definition from above (from the researcher rather than from the field); and from value imposition, with a problem in consequence over validity of constructs. In this third category Rockhill is critical of Boshier's use of Maslow's needs hierarchy, dichotomised to mean when applied to adult eduction that "spasmodic" or non-participants have no growth or actualisation needs: hence give them "bread and butter" courses and teach them how to survive (1982,7). She challenges Boshier's "gigantic leap in logic", whereby motivational orientations and neuroticism are linked to class distinctions (life-chance oriented people - neuroticism - spasmodic participation for coping with problems vs life-space oriented - continuous participants - upper socio-economic groups). Rockhill points out the extent to which quantitative research approaches atomise inquiry and may mask researcher bias and distort findings, and looks for qualitative inquiry to get to the meaning behind and beyond correlations among variables.

> Definitions of learning, learning episodes, participation and drop-out might be developed which capture the perceptions and experience of different individuals and groups of individuals... Also useful would be conceptualizing and theorizing about the settings of learning, the configuration of learning episodes, the resources of learning, and the who of learning. Particularly interesting would be greater insight into who learns what from whom, and how these relationships are affected by such factors as sex, age, ethnicity or class. (1982, 16)

This paper is not concerned principally with the need for or future of participation research in Australia. Some brief observations may however be in order. If provision is to be enhanced and catchment widened Sumner sees a need for more study of participant and popular perceptions of the roles of adult education agencies and of the needs of their associated communities. Such work would clearly have an applied, ameliorative, orientation. If survey-type quantitative studies are attempted in Australia there is much to be said for making them comparable with the work which Boshier is promoting. Researchers might use the same or compatible instruments and exchage data with Boshier's British Columbia resource centre. It is doubtful whether replication studies of this kind will however add much to knowledge, or provide a more effective agenda for action, unless it can be shown that circumstances in Australia are sufficiently different, or have changed sufficiently, to make such studies necessary. Changes that bear consideration include economic changes, notably persisting high unemployment; cultural, including loss of faith in growth, and the shifts associated with the women's and environmental movements; and, in the education sector, changes in retention rates and in mature age return to formal study.

My own inclination is in the direction of more qualitative studies, on lines indicated by Rockhill, and within a well-worked conceptual framework which makes clear the reasons for research. Especially in pragmatic Australia, applied and preferably action research, within a PR (participatory research), value-set and approach holds out more promise of enhancing practical understanding. This kind of research, with immediate change built in to the process, ought to appeal to those responsible for

programme planning. The question of research areas and modes also touches on the matter of Australia's place in the field of adult education research internationally; those interested in practising participation research in this country might also usefully consult Peter Long's recent review of Australian work (Long, 1983).

Implications of research findings

Adult educators suffer some ambiguity in their attitude to the formal education system.* They tend to wish both to be part of the total education system (as lifelong education approaches usually imply) and to be distinct (and better). The proud tradition of "volunteers for learning" has, however, not only been divisive for those who work in other kinds of education of adults. It has also (as the participation research clearly and repetitiously demonstrates) failed to deliver the goods in terms of promoting desirable social change and promoting equity through alternative or second chance education. The exceptions are occasional institutions and programmes in the community development and social action area. Studies of formal post-compulsory education in the West have repeatedly demonstrated that the formal education system reinforces rather than reduces social advantage and differentiation. The adult education participation research has by now shown unequivocally that adult education functions in the same direction. It is a sub-system - and a dependent variable rather than a source of change in the social structure - and not a means of redistribution or social change. Recent studies, for instance in Britain (Thompson, 1980, Griffin, 1983, Lovett et.al.,1983), examine the implications of this for adult education policy-making.

Rubenson in the next paper, prepared for the Canadian Ministry for Labour, on barriers to participation in adult education, draws out an important negative implication of stressing learning on the part of adult educators. It distracts attention from this key function, and failure, of adult education: 'while participation in self-directed learning appears to be almost universal, a corresponding and simultaneous betterment in the position of disadvantaged groups has not been observed' (Rubenson, 1983). And, later in the same paper, 'an "adult education" that implicitly takes for granted that the adult is a conscious, self-directed individual in possession of the instruments vital to making use of the available possibilities for adult education and that relies upon self-selection to recruit the participants, will help to widen, not narrow, the educational and cultural gaps in society.' Thus Tough's work on the self-directed learner, important in itself and linked with directions which Rockhill's qualitative work would explore, suffers in the shift from education to learning, from being apolitical. Such an emphasis may mask the (albeit embarrassing) inequitability of adult education: in stressing that all participate (in learning) this may divert attention from what is already established from participation research.

The analogies between Canadian and Australian society are close. Rubenson identifies in Canada a need to bring together the humanistic liberal adult education tradition and the human capital skill development approach which is emphasised in current economic circumstances. (Canada, like Australia,

*Manifested in the controversy about "andragogy".

faces the need for major retraining as accelerating technological change and a sharp reduction in skilled immigration coincide.) Sumner's emphasis on agency identities and popular perceptions of agencies is one important implication of participation research. Another is Rubenson's analysis of the tension between the equity values held by many adult educators and 'the way in which individuals' demands determine what the adult educational organizations supply. The activities of these organizations have been a response to manifest demands rather than to the needs stemming from inequalities in society... demands are negatively related to objective needs.' The service or enrolment economy orientation of adult education agencies in the western tradition is thus in conflict with the principle of equity. So is the ideal type of the adult education participant as sketched, for example, in the writing of Harold Wiltshire, propounding the ideals of the "great tradition".

What are the implications for programme planning in Australian adult education? There are lessons, whatever our stance. If we have no interest in the social role and effects of adult education, but take a strict service or market economy approach, there is still a host of practical lessons. We may accept that certain groups within the broadly defined middle classes are the natural and favoured clients and hone course and programme design, and marketing, to appeal to these groups more precisely. We may recognise that other categories of possible students (by age, sex, occupation or life-stage) sit a little outside our present main clientele but that some refining or retargeting of all or part of the programme could somewhat widen the catchment within the middle class sector. We might also recognise that there are large excluded categories in the community who could represent good business, if the right government departments and agencies are approached in the right way for special purpose disadvantaged group funding. We might indeed see a need to introduce more participative methods of market research, or needs analysis, and of course management and teaching, to engage students more and improve retention rates.

If we are interested in the equity issue, which is central to much participation research, quantitative as well as qualitative, there are again many possible implications. One may be to do a good service job as an adult educator, accepting that it is mainly a personal development-oriented consumption item, expressive of a middle class life-style and culture (and maybe join a political party or a community action group to work for social change at other times and in other ways). Another is to seek means whereby one's agency can indeed have effect, albeit modest in scope, as a change agency. Wilenski's recent writing, for instance in Australian Society, usefully explores the dilemmas of social reform, Australian-style. A good operator with some degrees of managerial freedom may conduct a "Robin Hood" operation within a total programme mix: high fee (liberal or vocationally oriented) courses then subsidise community development/community action/social change activities within or alongside the more conventional programme. For a few it may even be possible to define the whole agency's mission in this way (cf. Lovett et.al., 1983). Others may seek to infuse all their classes with an element of conscientisation; the approach would presumably be to begin by infusing the tutors themselves with the spirit and methodology of Freire.

Finally, and easier to countenance if one looks outside Australia and the West to adult education practices in other regions and traditions, one may

choose to enter into more purposeful social analysis of the kind indicated by Rubenson (and other Scandinavians also, in particular), and conceive of the work of the adult educator in terms of social groups and classes, social institutions, organisations and structures. This means looking to the education, learning and change not principally of atomised self-developing individuals, but of the institutions and arrangements of the society itself. This path may be ideologically unacceptable to many in the liberal, individualistic, western, tradition, and it may also be politically and administratively daunting for workers in many agencies. But it is hard to avoid the logic which points thither from the central findings of participation research.

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BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

Kjell Rubenson

Introduction

Adult education is starting to come into the forefront of public policy. To think of it as a matter mainly of private interest, to discuss it chiefly in terms of personal development, is to ignore the social role of adult education. The rising demand for public recognition of adult education reflects changing political, economic and cultural conditions and has its roots in two different schools of thought - the humanistic philosophy connected with lifelong education, and human capital theory linked to labour market considerations.

The idea of lifelong education was developed by Unesco in the 1970s into a master concept of educational policy with the aim of integrating all educational activities and serving as a guiding principle for educational reform in the member countries. The Unesco model derives its characteristics mainly from basic values - the humanistic concept of man and associated with it, the principles of democracy and collective worldwide responsibility (Alanen, 1982).

One of the cornerstones in the principle of lifelong education is the idea of horizontal integration. It spells out that education takes place in many settings outside the formal school system and that education should be brought to all sectors of social policy. There is a vision of a future learning society in which the conscious tasks of education are divided between all structures and communities in society (Faure, 1972). According to the humanistic concept of man the right to lifelong education and learning belongs to all people equally. The texts of Unesco are rather vague regarding the concepts of equality and democracy and do not spell out a very direct programme of action. Thus, with the exception of the Scandinavian countries, the idea of lifelong education has usually been criticised for being on the level of general principles and recommendations, giving guidelines but offering no concrete working methods for implementation of the models (see e.g. Kallen, 1979, 51).

Anything more radical which may happen in the area of implementing lifelong education is likely to be linked in general to developments in working life and in particular to strategies that deal with skill shortages.

It is quite possible that in the latter part of the twentieth century, the industrialised countries of the world will be facing a major educational and training challenge as labour force growth slows and technological change accelerates (Levin & Schuetze, 1983). Canada in particular is in a precarious situation. The country has to a large extent relied on immigration to solve its human resource needs and therefore refrained from developing a sophisticated and comprehensive educational and training infrastructure.

A sharp decline in immigration, a reduced inflow of newly-trained workers, and falling birth rates which will reduce the number and proportion of young people, will make it essential to develop strategies for educating and retraining the existing workforce.

It is obvious that the philosophies of lifelong education and labour market concerns are based on very different value systems. However, one thing they have in common is how to engage adults in education. The purpose of this paper is to present and interpret the research on barries to participation in adult education within a broad political and policy context.

RESEARCH ON BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

In order to get an understanding of barriers to participation in adult education, one has to look not only at studies dealing directly with reasons for not attending, but at the participation literature at large. Thus before turning to barriers, a short review will be given of the research on the characteristics of participants and motives for participation. The purpose is to present general trends rather than specific results from individual studies.

Who Participates in Organised Adult Education?

This and the next section are mainly based on the following literature reviews (Cross, 1979, 1981; Rubenson, 1977). Unfortunately, there are fewer major participation studies done in Canada than in the United States or Western Europe. Another difficulty is that the official Canadian statistics on adult education participation are underdeveloped. However, existing Canadian inquiries (e.g. Waniewicz, 1976; CAAE-ICEA, 1982) indicate that the general trends that can be detected in foreign studies hold true also for Canada.

The description of the characteristics of the participants are amazingly consistent across different countries and over the years. The general conclusion arrived at by Johnstone and Rivera in their comprehensive study in 1965 (p. 231) is as true today as it was almost twenty years ago: 'One of the most persistent findings emerging from the inquiry is that a great disparity exists in the involvement in continuing education of segments of the population situated at different levels of the social hierarchy'.

Table 1 presents the findings from a recent survey conducted by CAAE-ICEA.

TABLE 1

Participation Rates in Organised Adult Education in 1982
Percent Participation, N=2, 124 (after CAAE/ICEA, 1982:8)

Education	
Public	2
High School	11
Community College	34
University	32
Family Income	
<$10,000	5
$10,000-20,000	16
$20,000-30,000	20
$30,000 +	27
Age	
18-24	30
25-44	23
45-64	10
65 +	3
Sex	
F	16
M	17

From the literature, as well as from the figures in Table 1, it is clear that educational attainment is by far the best predictor of participation in adult education.

From a policy point of view the relationship between income and participation is crucial. As indicated in Table 1, and clearly revealed in the research literature, there is a connection between income and engagement in adult education. However when age and educational attainment are controlled, income has little influence on the rate of participation.

Different studies have found educational attainment to have a much stronger relationship to participation than occupation. Although occupation accounts for a little participation, its effect is quite secondary by comparison. However, it is worth mentioning that when education is controlled for white collar workers have a higher participation rate and interest in adult education than blue collar workers. Taken together the effects of educational attainment, occupation and income are enormous and through their combined influence rates of participation rise from virtual nonexistence to levels which include one person in two (Johnstone and Rivera, 1965).

Participation and interest in adult education are clearly related to age. Interest, as well as participation, starts to decline in the early thirties and drops sharply after the age of fifty. Age does not operate independently but interacts with level of educational attainment. Thus the change in participation rate by age is most dramatic among those with little previous education.

While the elderly remain one of the most under-represented of all subgroups there has been a substantial growth in their level of participation in recent years.

Women and men participate to about the same extent. In most studies women express more interest in adult education than men. Looking worldwide, the recent growth of participation by women has been spectacular due to increased opportunities in both education and career. In the US, for example, women increased their participation by 15 per cent between 1975 to 1978, whereas men showed a drop of two per cent (Cross, 1979, 59). The changing relationship between the sexes is especially noteworthy, given the fact that women are more likely to be paying for their own education than men. This is partly a result of the fact that they have fewer possibilities than men for education and training paid for by employers.

The discussion so far has only dealt with organised adult education and thus does not take into account the whole area of self-education. What makes the research on self-directed learning especially interesting from a policy point of view is that the results partly contradict what has been found with regard to participation in organised adult education.

According to Tough (1978) the results from studies directed to the question of adult's self education show:

> Participation in self-directed learning is almost universal. Studies report that from 70 to 100 per cent of all adults conduct at least one learning project each year.

The typical adult spends about one hundred hours on each learning project, conducting five projects each year, for a total of five hundred hours per year. This means that self-directed projects are, on average, of longer duration than the typical college course carrying three credit hours.

Almost three-quarters of the learning projects of adults are entirely self-directed; about 15 per cent involve group learning, 10 per cent are one-to-one learning situations, and 3 per cent utilize completely pre-programmed, non-human resources such as tapes, programmed instruction and television. Only 20 per cent of all learning projects are planned by a professional who is paid or institutionally designated to facilitate the learning.

Self-directed learning is, compared to organized instruction, relatively free of class bias since demographic variables have little or no influence on the choice to learn. Poor people with little formal education do plenty of learning but they do it on their own or with peers instead of in adult education classes. In participation in learning efforts during adulthood, there does not seem to be any large imbalance, any grossly underrepresented group, nor any particular unfairness or injustice.

The results from research on self-directed learning are dangerous in the way they suggest that a large number of adults are involved in learning activities outside organized education. Policy-makers could easily be blinded by research statements concerning the great scope of self-directed learning, which represents an inexpensive form of education for society while not encroaching on the territories of the traditional, more prestigious, types of education. The fact is that while participation in self-directed learning appears to be almost universal, a corresponding and simultaneous betterment in the position of disadvantaged groups has not been observed.

Socio-demographic factors like age, income, education and so on are useful primarily in specifying which groups are involved and serving as a warning signal. However, they do not directly tell us why adults engage in education.

Motives for Participation

Table 2 gives a summary of the findings on motives for participation in adult education.

The summary of results in Table 2 shows the clear connection between the situation in which persons find themselves and their engagement in adult education.

With this short presentation of the general participation literature as a background, the discussion now turns to perceived barriers.

TABLE 2
Summary of the Literature
Concerning Motives to Engage in Adult Education

The strongest motives for participating are "work" and personal satisfaction.

Typically about one third give personal satisfaction as their main reason for participaton.

One powerful reason for participating is the desire to make practical use of the knowledge acquired.

Preparation for new jobs is mainly emphasised by persons under 30 and drops off sharply after age 50.

Professionals and college graduates are more likely to be seeking advancement in present jobs than blue collar workers.

Pensioners look for courses where they can acquire knowledge which will help them to adjust to their new role in society.

Women working at home tend more than others to state that they participate to "get out of the rut" and "see new faces".

Personal satisfaction is a stronger motive among the upper classes than among the lower.

There is a steadily growing number of people taking courses for recreational reasons.

Barriers to Participation

There has been much less research devoted to finding out why large groups do not participate than why they do. The most commonly used approach has been to ask people through interviews or questionnaires. The results from these kind of studies are often difficult to interpret. If, for example, large groups state that the reasons for not taking part is high cost, does this mean that a reduction in cost would substantially increase the participation rate? Fortunately there are some longitudinal studies that together with recent field experiments add to our knowledge of actual behaviour.

It is common to classify recruitment impediments into situational, dispositional, and institutional barriers. Situational barriers stem from the person's most immediate situation and could be lack of time due to home or work responsibilities, geographical isolation and so on. Dispositional barriers are linked to one's self-concept, confidence, level of aspirations and attitudes to adult education. Institutional barriers have to do with the availability of relevant courses, scheduling and so on.

Situational Barriers

Looking at perceived barriers across different studies, it is obvious that situational barriers dominate, especially lack of time and cost. Waniewicz's (1976) study of demand for part-time learning in Ontario showed that the problem of being busy consistuted 22 percent of all past obstacles mentioned by learners, 28 percent of all obstacles experienced currently by learners, and 23 percent of all obstacles experienced by "would-be learners". Without knowing how a person is spending his time, it is difficult to interpret these kinds of results. It is as much a question of how one chooses to use the available time as being too busy to participate. A closer look at the actual life situation reveals that many "would-be learners" have much the same tasks to perform as those who participate in adult education (Rubenson, et al., 1977). However, families with three and more children, and those with irregular working hours, are worse off than others.

Available research does not indicate that an increase in leisure time will necessarily lead to a boom for adult educaton. Robinson's (1977) time budget study in the United States showed that leisure increased between 1956 and 1975 by an average of some four hours per week. This was accounted for by a reduction in the amount of time which the subjects reported that they had devoted to jobs and domestic chores. Where adult education is concerned we may note that the extra leisure was almost entirely absorbed by increased television viewing and few persons had drawn upon it for educational purposes. Such results are interesting in view of the fears of economists and politicians that the heavy unemployment now prevailing is not a passing phase but can be partly expected to persist even in a boom period. Measures such as drastic reductions of working hours, the introduction of sabbatical years and other forms of worksharing are being considered as means of enlarging the portion of people in employment. The critical question with regard to adult education is to what extent the resultant leisure increase will be applied to education, and what part is to be played by the various organisers of adult education.

Cost is a very difficult barrier to study via the survey method. Many who refer to cost as a barrier do not know the actual cost. Furthermore, willingness to pay is not the same as ability to pay. However, it is clear from the literature that cost is a stronger impediment among the lower socio-economic groups than among the higher.

There are no comprehensive data in Canada on who pays for adult education. In the U.S.A. public funding is supporting adult education for about one third of black learners, while employers are supporting educational costs for about a third of white males. Females are the only population group in which the majority of the learners pay for educational costs from their own funds (Cross, 1981, 100). Thus it is quite understandable that women are more likely than men to cite cost of education as a barrier.

While the results from surveys of perceived barriers are somewhat problematic to interpret, much can be learned from how a change in financing affects adult education participation. Follow-up studies of the impact of Proposition 13 on California community colleges show that the savage reduction in public funding for education led to a drastic reduction in the number of persons engaged in this kind of education (Cross, 1981, 101).

The decrease was especially pronounced in part-time studies in non-credit courses (down 40 percent). It is unclear how much of the drop was due to cancelling of courses (20 percent of the noncredit courses were dropped) and how much came as a result of a shift of 10 percent of the courses to fee-supported status (Cross, 1981).

Bishop and Van Dyke (1977) found that the termination of Vietnam war veteran benefits led to a dramatic decrease in the enrolment in community colleges.

A general problem with regard to cost is that the general university and college student financing systems have been developed with 18-22 year olds in mind and not adults. The person who wishes to embark on a longer education and who has previously been gainfully employed has to accept a marked reduction in living standards. Simulations by the Swedish National Board of Statistics have indicated that a transition to full-time studies would result in a dramatic increase in the number of households falling below the subsistence level (SCB, 1981).

There are naturally other situational barriers than cost or lack of time, such as absence of child care facilities or lack of transportation. In comparison to the former the latter are of less general importance; however they can have a large impact on specific groups.

Dispositional Barriers

Looking at the research on barriers one is left with an impression that most people not participating in adult education are nonetheless highly motivated to avail themselves of the opportunities provided, but that they are prevented by external factors from doing so. There are two reasons why psychological barriers are only mentioned by five to fifteen percent of the respondents. First, it is not as socially acceptable to give these kind of impediments as it is situational or institutional barriers. Secondly, the instruments are often constructed in such a way that there is a built-in bias for situational barriers.

The issue of social bias is clearly demonstrated in a study by Wilcox, et al., 1976 (referred to in Cross, 1981, 107). The respondents were asked not only to cite barriers to their own learning but also to speculate on why other adults among their acquaintances did not take part in educational activities. Lack of interest was a leading barrier (26 per cent) attributed to others, but fewer than two per cent were willing to admit that lack of interest determined their own participation.

The central role of dispositional barriers was also unveiled in one of the few existing longitudinal studies on barriers (Rubenson, 1975). In this investigation data were collected at several points in time allowing the investigator to examine impediments in light of both previous intentions and actual participation. It was noted that those who did participate could be recognised by the infrequency with which they reported psychological obstacles prior to recruitment. Those who were not interested and did not participate were conspicuous by the emphasis they placed upon psychological factors, in particular "had enough of school" and "already got enough out of life".

Looking at different subgroups it is clear that fear of not being able to succeed with the studies is greater among older than among younger persons. Further, negative attitudes toward adult education are chiefly found among lower socio-economic groups.

Institutional Barriers

Institutional barriers are mentioned by 10 to 25 per cent of "would-be-learners" in most surveys. This kind of barrier is mostly found in connection with university and college programmes originally devised for full-time learners.

Institutional barriers can usually be grouped into the following five categories: (1) scheduling problems; (2) problems with location and transportation; (3) lack of courses that are interesting, practical or relevant; (4) procedural problems related to attendance, red-tape, time requirements, and so on; and (5) lack of information about procedures and programmes (Cross, 1979, 111).

During the seventies college programmes have been made more accessible to working adults through: scheduling classes so that working adults can attend; by granting credit for non-collegiate learning; and by creating more flexible admission procedures. However, changes in procedures in order to accommodate adults have occurred to a lesser extent in Canada than in the United States.

The most commonly reported institutional barriers are scheduling and probems with location or transportation. To a certain extent these, like barriers such as the absence of courses which are interesting, stem from inadequate information about the options which do exist, although it would be a mistake totally to write off these obstacles as an information problem. Rubenson, et al. (1977), found that despite a wide selection of courses which were offered, a large group stated that they had no opportunity to study the course they desired. An examination of the actual curriculum in the region showed that these statements were not completely attributable to ignorance of opportunities; they also reflected deficiencies in the range of opportunities.

As Cross (1979, 112) points out, "Public policy decisions may encourage further removal of institutional barriers, but the major challenge for policy-makers lies in better understanding of dispositional barriers". Such an understanding cannot be reached simply by looking at empirical descriptions of who participates, motives for participation, and perceived barriers to participation. What is needed is a theoretical framework which can serve as a basis for analysing the above-presented empirical findings.

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING BARRIERS

In a very simplistic way a person's decision whether to participate or not could be described in the following way:

VALENCE
- Sees participation in adult education as a conceivable means of satisfying experienced needs

HIGH PROBABILITY
OF PARTICIPATION

EXPECTANCY
- Believes oneself to be in a position to complete and successfully cope with a course.

Persons who do not see participation in adult education as a means of satisfying needs and/or who do not believe themselves capable of completing their studies will probably not participate. The above structure, based on the general expectancy-valence theory, is a fruitful point of departure to understand the individual's psychological apparatus, i.e. the individual's decision-making process. However, knowledge about how the individual interprets the world cannot by itself give an understanding of barriers. Only when we also include structural factors and analyse the interaction between them and the individual conceptual apparatus does an interpretation become possible. The model presented in Figure 1 should be seen as an effort in this direction.

Figure 1: Model of Recruitment and Barriers

ACTIVE PREPAREDNESS
(Socialisation through family, school and work)

STRUCTURAL FACTORS
(Hierarchical, Structure in Working Life, Member and Reference Group, Study Possibilities)

CURRENT NEEDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

VALENCE
- Sees participation in adult education as a conceivable means of satisfying experienced needs

HIGH PROBABILITY
OF PARTICIPATION

EXPECTANCY
- Believes oneself to be in a position to complete and successfully cope with a course

Like all models, that presented in Figure 1 is a simplified image of reality.

Through the socialisation which has taken place within the family, the school and occupational life, individuals have developed an attitude and approach to, among other things, different forms of adult education. This is expressed in the degree of active preparedness for adult education.

Concerning the structural factors, the focus of attention is on factors in the current environment which may conceivably stimulate or inhibit participation. I have argued elsewhere (Rubenson, 1977) that the degree of hierarchical structure in the work-life and values of the member and reference groups appears to be of central importance. Another influential factor is study possibilities, such as admissions policies, financial aid system, course offerings and information. Of course there are other factors which, to varying extents, influence the participation of different groups. Hierarchical structure, member and reference groups and study possibilities, however, appear to be of general significance and have therefore been accorded special status in the modee.

The other main component comprises the current needs of the individual, which among other things reflect his or her material situation and the developmental tasks confronting the individual during his life cycle.

Using the model as a starting point, an attempt will be made to give a comprehensive explanation to barriers, especially dispositional barriers, and to indicate some necessary prerequisites in order to change the present situation.

Active Preparedness

How are we to account for the fact that educational levels consistently shows the highest correlation with participation in adult education? To some extent, of course, it reflects the fact that the highly educated are often in occupational positions which offer opportunities for participation in different forms of education. The literature shows, however, that the differences are even larger where non-competence-giving adult education is concerned.

This can be explained by the socialisation which has taken place within the family, in the school system and, later on, in working life. This has resulted in adult education becoming a part of the value system of certain groups but not of other groups. Participation in non-competence-giving adult education thus has been shown to be a part of a leisure style consisting of types of cultural activities usually found in the middle and upper classes. (Bergsten, 1977, p. 136.)

In public debate the school is often pointed out as the major villain. However, it is not very fruitful to concentrate on the degree of comfort and well-being experienced by students in order to explain the school's influence on subsequent participation in adult education. Interest ought instead to be directed to the role pre-adult education is awarded in society. It is puzzling that adult educators can so fully embrace the principle of lifelong education and yet still treat adult education as a system in splendid isolation.

There are three things a person requires before he is able to perform satisfactorily in a role (Brim, 1966). He must know what is expected of him (both with regard to behaviour and values); he must be able to meet the role requirements; and he must desire to practise the behaviour and pursue the appropriate ends.

The object of youth education is to develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral states demanded of him not solely by the political society as a whole but also by the particular milieu for which he is specifically destined (Durkheim, 1956, 71). Thus, despite some rhetoric to the contrary, children do not leave the education system with the same basic values.

This is important to understand, as the major changes from childhood to adult socialisation are the shifts in emphasis from motivation to ability and knowledge, and from concern with values to a concern with behaviour. Society assumes that the adult knows the values to be pursued in different roles, that he wants to pursue them with the socially appropriate means, and that all that remains to be done is to teach him what to do.That this interpretation of adult socialisation governs the perceived functions of adult education is reflected in the following quotation from Verner (1964:88):

> For purposes of adult education, at least we can say, therefore, that an adult is a person who has come into that state of life in which he assumed responsibility for himself and usually for others, and who has concomitantly accepted a functionally productive role in his community.

In order to account fully for the cumulative effects of the pre-adult education system, we also have to look at the way the education system helps to define which people are allocated to different social settings and how these settings influence participation in adult education (see the discussion of structural factors below).

Due to selective socialisation and the allocation function of education, adults will come to differ with regard to how they value education, how they are motivated to pursue education, and their ability to participate in education. An "adult education" that implicitly takes for granted that the adult is a conscious, self-directed individual in possession of the instruments vital to making use of the available possibilities for adult education and that relies on self-selection to recruit the participants, will help to widen, not narrow, the educational and cultural gaps in society.

Structural Factors

Structural factors tend to strengthen previously established inequalities. It is those with a high degree of active preparedness who are in environments which give them scope for influencing their situation (i.e. a low degree of hierarchic structure). Their member and reference groups are often positive to adult education, and moreover they have, relatively, the best access to education.

If for a moment we regard differences in active preparedness as constant (of course they also change in a changing surrounding world) the question becomes what changes can be achieved concerning structural factors and what significance these ultimately have in counteracting over time the accumulated inequalities which have been established? I shall touch upon three areas - member and reference groups, working life, and study possibilities.

Member and Reference Groups

On this point I will refer to Newcomb (1950, 225 ff), who introduced the concepts of member and reference groups. According to Newcomb, the former type is a group of which the person is an acknowledged member, e.g. the family, or political or religious groups. The individual shares the norms of the group not only because he is acknowledged but also because he has learned to satisfy his needs on the basis of commonly accepted norms. Often, however, one learns to utilise norms from other groups of which one is not an acknowledged member. This is why Newcomb believes it is fruitful to distinguish between member groups and reference groups. We may assume that all member groups serve as reference groups, one way or another, while on the other hand not all reference groups serve as member groups. Brunner (1959) touches on the relation between participation in adult education and the norms of member groups. He refers to a study by Houle (1947) which showed that education programmes based on the interests of individuals reached smaller numbers of people than those which were based on the pattern of values in the group. Thus it was found that the course preferences of the persons consulted were determined more by the values of the group than by individual interests.

Newcomb's approach is fruitful not only when one wishes to explain differences of dispositional barriers between less well-educated and well-educated persons, or the behaviour of minority groups, but also when trying to understand the differences existing within the under-educated group. Several studies have shown that white collar workers, regardless of occupational level, participate in adult education more than manual workers. Rubenson (1975), 224ff) found no differences between the two groups with regard to situational impediments, but there were differences in their attitudes to education. One possible explanation is that the former are influenced more than the latter by other people besides their co-workers, the latter being regarded for present purposes as a member group. In many cases it may conceivably be that white collar workers form a reference group with a positive attitude toward adult education. To this is added the fact that the working group, regarded as a member group, has by tradition constituted a stronger pressure group among manual workers than among white collar workers. This is discussed, for example, by Miller (1967), who observes the conflicts existing in the U.S.A. between the values of the working class and the values represented by educational institutions. According to Miller, this conflict is manifested by the indifference of American trade unions to questions concerning adult education.

It is clear from the experience and the theoretical approaches mentioned above that it is not enough to try to inform and influence individual persons; one also has to work through the groups to which the individual belongs and with which he or she identifies. This has been made apparent not least by the experimental outreach work conducted in Sweden.

Few, if any, Swedish adult educational experiments have aroused as much attention internationally as the experimental programme FOVUX, which pursued outreaching activities. Trying to interest people in adult education through personal contact is, of course, not new. The new feature which arrived with FOVUX was to give the outreaching activity a more established form and organisation to act as a recruitment model based on earmarked state funds (SOU 1974, 54). The experiments were conducted both at the work-place and in housing areas. Judging from the number of those recruited it is obvious that the greatest successes have been achieved at work-places. More than 40 percent of the blue collar workers contacted came to participate in a course. The recruitment figure in the housing areas was about 25 percent.

A fundamental difference is that the contact within housing areas is directed at individuals while contact at the work-place is collective. The success of FOVUX depends partly on the fact that the outreaching activity included the overwhelming majority of the work group, thus affecting not only the individual but also one of his most significant member-groups.

Study Possibilities

In the theoretical considerations underlying the sketch in Figure 1 participation is very much dependent on whether the individual sees any value in education, i.e. whether he expects through education to meet the demands made by him, thereby influencing his own situation.

In order to understand why the equity effects of adult education are so small we have to look at the way in which individuals' demands determine what the adult educational organisations supply. The activities of these organisations have been a response to manifest demands rather than to the needs stemming from inequalities in society.

Results from welfare surveys and research on participation in adult education bluntly reveal that demands are negatively related to objective needs of education (i.e., being underprivileged). Put very simplistically, there is a vicious circle: poor childhood conditions, short formal education, low educational standard in adult life, reduced opportunities for participating in political life, no influence through participation, no improvement of the educational standard, etc. The implication of this claim with regard to demand for adult education is that the objective conditions will cause difficulties in looking after one's own rights, obtaining information, etc.

There are two main reasons why demands determine the supply, even when there is an underlying intention to reach a more equitable situation: the conflict between goals, and the system of financing.

The problem is that the equity goal is never the sole goal of adult education. In some instances it does not even exist. However, even when it is present it coexists with the economic and "service" (the satisfaction of individual preferences) goals. There is a fundamental opposition between these goals when they are combined to the same degree or within the same organisations.

The equity "profits" raise very high service-policy "costs" if a measure is determined for both goals. A policy for equity means a striving for equalisation which, in turn, implies a wish or a conception that certain groups shall "consume" a supply. The policy is determined by, in one way or another, objectively determined needs. Service-policy means that the demands must be satisfied, and such a policy is, at the same time, determined by these needs.

This raises two problems that are very seldom solved. The first is to stimulate the demands among the groups for which a measure is taken. The second is to under-stimulate the demands from groups that are not direct objects for a measure.

The subsidies to the adult educational organisations are of a general character. Often the support is based on the number of participants and/or lessons. The subsidies are not, in other words, aimed at improving the recruitment of the underprivileged or at producing a specific result. Even worse, many of the organisations must to a large extent rely on student fees. In the local competitive situation, the organisations with a service oriented activity will have a "market-leading" position. The reason for this is that the financing formula gives the service-policy-oriented organisation certain advantages. Thus an organisation that wants to reach equity effects is forced by the market to partly adopt a service policy orientation. If they started to act solely with an equity purpose, they would soon lose a great deal of the foundation for their activities. this loss would mean that, in the future, it would be impossible to provide even the few equity activities they have today. To bring about a change it is necessary that the future subsidies to adult education be earmarked for equity purposes to a much larger extent than has previously been the case. This, however, requires one to express more exactly the group whose living condition should be equalised and deeper knowledge of the study methods and the content which can create equity effects, i.e., redistribution of social, political, cultural and economic resources.

One strategy to change the existing link between supply and demand is to finance adult education taking place in various voluntary organisations. This would give different interest groups the power to control the content and method and allow their educatonal programmes to reflect their ideology. On this point it is of interest to look at the experiences from paid educational leave in the Federal Republic of Germany. One of the reasons why paid educational leave has not lived up to its potential or to the hopes of its proponents stems from the gap between educational and training offerings and the needs and expectations of adults, particularly adults with little or not more than compulsory schooling (Schuetze, 1983). The German federal government has therefore decided to sponsor some extensive model programmes where the needs, interests and motivation of special target groups (e.g. young people, migrant workers, women, un- or semi-skilled industrial workers) have been studied and evaluated in order to assess the kinds of outreach, counselling and course content which can best reach these groups.

Working Life

The allocation of roles in society influences participation in two ways. Firstly, certain roles provide more opportunities to take part in adult

education than do others. Not only do those in higher positions get more opportunities through their work to take part in institutionalised forms of education, but they also have by far the best chances to learn new things on the job itself.

Table 3

Possibilities to Learn New Things On the Job by Socio-economic group, Employment Volume and Formal Education

Percent Not Learning New things (After, S.C.B.,1981:51)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP EMPLOYMENT VOLUME FORMAL EDUCATION	PERCENT NOT LEARNING NEW THINGS	N
Workers		
Unskilled Workers	74	568
Semi-skilled Workers	61	799
Skilled Workers	41	654
All Workers	58	2021
Salaried Employees		
Junior salaried employees	40	648
Intermediate-level Salaried Employees	24	567
Senior Salaried Employees	17	362
All Salaried Employees	29	1578
Farmers	55	131
Entrepreneurs	29	286
Employment Volume		
Full-time Employees	40	1721
Part-time Employees	60	877
Educational Level		
Extremely Short Formal Education	63	160
Pre-secondary	59	1003
Secondary	40	1652
Post-secondary	24	696

Table 3 reflects the polarisation that occurs in working life. The differences existing among various groups entering the labour market become more and more pronounced throughout the life span. Those who are favoured find themselves in a work situation which is contantly generalising a need for knowledge, while the complete opposite applies to those who suffer dequalification. While it is true that a growing number of the labour

force is engaged in tasks requiring higher qualifications and a greater degree of specialisation, mechanisation and automation have substantially reduced the qualifications required of large groups. One of the most urgent and difficult issues is to develop an educational strategy for avoiding a permanent under-class of unskilled and low-paid workers. As has been argued by Levin and Schuetze (1983), high technology jobs will be expanding at a faqter rate than many of the more traditional ones, but they will represent only a very small portion of the total number of new jobs that will be created in the next two decades. For example, although the number of positions for such jobs as computer operators is expected to double in the USA in the 1980-1990 period, this will result in the net creation of only about 160,000 new jobs in that area (Carey, 1982: referred to in Levin & Schuetze, 1983). However, during the same period, the number of new jobs for janitors and sextons is expected to approach almost 700,000 and there will be 492,000 new jobs for food preparation and service workers in fast food restaurants (Carey), referred to in Levin and Schuetze, 1983).

The other way that the allocation of roles has an impact is more indirect and has to do with how the objective world influences the perception of reality. Thus, mental structures are inevitably formed differently in different societal and historical settings (Mannheim, 1936, 238). This is reflected, for example, in the established relationship between job design and the individual's life outside of work. Meissner (1971) was able to demonstrate a direct connection between the shaping of work tasks and the life of the individual outside working hours. When the scope for individual initiative at work was limited by factors in the work process, the ability of workers to participate during their leisure in activities posing demands of this kind appeared to diminish. A similar tendency emerges regarding the effect of work affording limited opportunities for social contact. When workers are alowed more control over their work, they show more interest in participating in decision-making processes. Accompanying changes also occur in their leisure activities and lead to a more active leisure (Bergsten, 1977).

Of particular interest is the line taken by the trade unions. Thorough-going changes in the educational situation of the employees will probably require, among other things, greater involvement of trade union organisations in matters connected with adult education. One step in this direction is for the trade unions to endeavour, by means of legislation or collective bargaining, to gain added control over education. The reason for underlining the importance of the trade unions so heavily is that they should be capable of playing an important part in bringing about a scheme of adult education that is conducive to systematic change and which provides the collective with a means of obtaining better conditions. The great majority of adults in ordinary occupations and with ordinary social conditions cannot improve their situation by means of individual careers, by "doing something else". Nor can they rest content with improvements within the framework of existing conditions. Instead, the main opportunities of a better life are to be found in the transformation of of work by collective efforts. In the ultimate analysis, the crucial question will be whether work is organised in such a way as to facilitate a more even distribution of knowledge within the work force.

The issues of industrial democracy and reforms of working life is crucial to the Canadian debate on human resources. The relationship between human

skills and industrial restructuring depends not only upon the extent of provision of education and training, but also on the effectiveness with which the actual stock of knowledge is used in practice. The reason for Japan's economic success is to a large extent due to utilisation of existing human resources.

In summary, a person's decision whether to participate or not will to a large extent depend on earlier socialisation, the hierarchical structure of work, values of member and reference groups and the way that the demand governs the supply of adult education.

CONCLUDING REMARK

The purpose of this paper has been to examine barriers to participation in adult education.

The conclusion is that close attention has to be paid to the link between educational and labour market developments and barriers to engagement in adult education.

At present, the focus is on how to provide the future supply of human resources in Canada. There is an apparent danger that this will be done by relying on specific measures unrelated to educational policy in general. Further, the strategy may be based solely on labour market and economic efficiency considerations and neglect the equity aspect.

In order to avoid this scenario there is a need for a closer coordination of educational policy and other social sectors, especially labour policy and social policy. What is called for is a coherent approach not to one issue, skill development, but to the complex of interrelated problems that Canadian society is facing - skill shortage, high unemployment, polarisation of the labour market, and insufficient worker and social participation.

In this perspective one should consider a rapprochement of the two different forces promoting adult eduation, lifelong education embedded in humanistic philosophy and the human capital thinking that is behind the skill development "movement".

If lifelong education is going to become anything but airy ideas there must be a direct programme of action. One possible way for this to happen could be through some kind of paid educational leave system which would promote the distribution of education over the total life span of the individual in a recurring way.

A rapprochement is of interest not only as a way to implement lifelong education but also from the strict economic efficiency concern that surrounds the discussions on skill development. As was pointed out earlier the problem is not only one of development of human resources but also the utilisation of existing skills. This calls for increased worker participation and the democratisation of the workplace, ideas that are central in the philosophy of lifelong education.

Whether the educational and cultural gaps will increase or decrease in the future will to a large extent depend on the developments in working life and public policies on the distribution of resources for adult education. It is in this broad context that barriers to adult education should be understood.

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THEORIES AND MODELS OF PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

Doug MacLean

Cross (1981) comments upon the absence of theory in adult education. She believes that theory is one of the most under-utilised vehicles for the understanding of various aspects of the adult education enterprise. She attributes this ostensible lack of theory-building to the pragmatism of adult educators, whose concern often is with 'delivery-systems' and ensuring that the programmes they are promoting become a reality. This conceptual desert (Boshier, 1971) is no more apparent than in a recent major text on adult learning (Long, 1983) where the notion of research providing a foundation for practice is discussed (p.18) but, at no stage does Long consider the inter-relationship of research and theory, and its interaction with practice. This lack of attention to the role of theory in adult education has crippled adult education activity in a number of ways. Firstly, it enhances the conceptual desert by inhibiting the generation of new perspectives; by failing to provide the jumping-off point for lateral thinking about adult education. Secondly, there is the reinforcement of current hegemonies within the adult education domain. This acceptance of current practice and the failure to ask the "wrong" questions leads to the proliferation of the same kind of research efforts. For example, Boshier is still conducting factor-analyses of a scale he derived from Sheffield (1964) more than a decade ago (Boshier and Collins, 1983). Thirdly, the inarticulation of the theory which implicitly "drives" current practice limits the accountability of adult educators on the one hand, and on the other hand, really denies the acceptance of the fact that <u>all</u> behaviour is ultimately "theory-driven".

There is a sense, then, in which theory directs behaviour. Behaviour is the outcome of theory; theory operates when, for example, an individual runs after a bus. The running is predicated on the belief that it will enable the bus to be caught; it also suggests that the bus will be at a particular bus-stop at the appropriate time; that running is faster than walking, and so on. Theory-building is concerned with prediction, and expectation. An individual is concerned with prediction, and expectation. An individual pushes on a door and believes that if the actions are appropriate then the door will in fact open, or at least have a high probability of opening. Theory-building is rooted in perception and the individual's definition of the situation.

Much adult education work is erected on the basis of inarticulated theory - perhaps on the assumptions, for example, that "what was done last year, will be good enough for this year"; or "what I received (or did not receive as the case may be) <u>they</u> ought to have", or "these people are 'deficiency-orientated' and therefore they need remedial education". Often these inarticulated theories are based upon experience and intuition, and rationalised as such, if questions are raised about the appropriateness or otherwise of a course of action being considered. The articulation of implicit theory is important because it opens up for public scrutiny the conceptual and logical links between the connecting series of propositions which make up the theory. A model is often a schematic representation of theory, or part of a theory. Public access is important, additionally, in

that the theory may provide a stimulus to new thinking and conceptualisation, which may in turn lead to better informed practice on the part of adult educators. Kurt Lewin is often quoted as remarking that "nothing is as practical as a good theory". The corollary is also true: "nothing is more theoretical than good practice".

This paper focusses on some of the more influential models of participation in adult education, evaluates them, and then attempts to build on them in the formulation of new ideas, which may eventually lead to the development of new theory.

Boshier's Congruence Model

Boshier (1971; 1973) posits a two-step model of participation in adult education. He is rather ambitious in his claims that his model also predicts non-participation, particularly when he claims to have buttressed his theory by his empirical work. As far as is known, he has not conducted any empirical work with people who have not enrolled in some form of continuing education activity.

The first step of the model involves the identification of those whom he defines as either "growth" or "deficiency" oriented. This is accomplished through the use of the Education Participation Scale (E.P.S.), a measure developed from the work of Sheffield (1964), who deserves far more credit than Boshier (1971) is prepared to give. The "growth" motivated people are those who are open to experience, and who are moving or progressing through some kind of initial heterostasis to an equilibrium at a higher level. In a later paper (Boshier, 1977), these "growth" oriented individuals are further described as "life-space" individuals, in contrast to the "deficiency" motivated people who are termed "life-chance" individuals. Rockhill (1982) trenchantly criticises some of the assumptions being made here by Boshier. The "deficiency" oriented individual is seeking to establish some kind of stasis - to move towards homeostasis through remedial action for felt or perceived needs within areas of their life.

The E.P.S. is an instrument which appears to lack construct validity (MacLean, 1984), and whose predictive validity is unknown. There are "errors" in Boshier's empirical work and this, together with suspect logic and "quantum leaps" in logic (Rockhill, 1982) helps to erode the foundations of his model. His model received a further setback when he fails adequately to link steps one and two within the model together.

Step two moves on from step one, in that it suggests that being either "deficiency" or "growth" oriented has implications for the individual's persistence in or dropping out from continuing education. The argument is that individuals who are "growth" oriented tend to be more congruent not only in relation to their "ideal-self" but also in relation to key aspects within the educational environment. The reverse is true for the "deficiency" oriented, who tend to manifest intra-self, self/other and self/institution incongruence. The degree of congruence or incongruence as measured by the Personality and Educational Environment Scales (P.E.E.S.) ought then to be directly related to definitions of growth or deficiency as measured by the E.P.S.

His model receives a further undermining because the P.E.E.S. instruments are weak in the areas of construct and predictive validity. Incongruence is measured by the difference betwen perceptions of self using a semantic-differential format, and perceptions of the ideal-self; other adult education students; and the adult education tutor. The reliability of difference scores is such that extreme caution has to be exercised in deciding whether the difference score reflects a real difference, or whether the variance of the difference scores is mainly made up of error variance (Ferguson, 1966:383). In other words, whilst Boshier has shown that differences exist between group mean scores of persisters and dropouts on the basis of t-tests, this difference may be caused solely by the "band of error" which surrounds difference scores. As Ferguson suggests "the point here is that difference scores may be grossly unreliable and should be used only after careful scrutiny of the data". (383) It may have been more appropriate for Boshier to have allocated individuals into congruent-incongruent categories, after a close scrutiny of the data and then on this basis used a X analysis to determine whether or not congruents differed significantly from incongruents in terms of their persistence in continuing education.

This is, of course, assuming that the P.E.E.S. does in fact measure incongruence. This has not been demonstrated by Boshier in any of his work. In other words, the P.E.E.S. seems to be measuring something, yet to be determined, somewhat unreliably. These deficiencies within the instruments used by Boshier, together with the lack of logical and conceptual clarity, limit the quality of the model, mainly because Boshier is so insistent that theory must be rooted in evidence (Boshier and Collins, 1983).

There are interesting ideas within the model which, however, need much more careful exploration. For example, the tension between the seemingly incompatible drives for homeostatis and heterostasis - the contradictory movements between "chaos" and "order" - may probably co-exist within the individual at any one time. The imposition of order on disorganisation; the delineation of structure; and hence the constructive of meaning on the one hand (see for example, Kahneman, 1973), and on the other hand, the need for individuals to "create" excitement; to break up stable, and apparently fixed patterns; to provoke and evoke images through hallucination in sensory deprivation experiments, point to these two possibly contradictory needs within the human organism. Boshier has difficulty in realising that these may in fact not be polar opposites on a continuum, but may, rather, be orthogonal, separate processes. Nor ought there to be pejorative labels attached to either way of construing and reacting to the world. Differentiation and synthesis may operate differently within individuals over time, and among individuals at the same time.

Adult educators may need to be aware of this, and may enable the potential adult education participants to identify where they are at in relation to these probably differing processes. It may be that certain kinds of activity are more appropriate for one rather than the other. Witkin (1973), for example, has shown that cognitive style mismatching can have implications for the efficacy of learning and performance. This mismatching may occur at the student/tutor level, and also at the student/course level. I suspect that the same difficulties may appear with varying degrees of "synthesising".

Boshier has to be commended for not necessarily relying on socio-economic variables, such as educational level, income and so on, to "explain" participation in adult education. It may be illuminating to discover some of the characteristics of those from lower S.E.S. groups who participate, and compare them with those from the higher S.E.S. groups, and conversely, why some in the higher S.E.S. groups who ostensibly are more interested in adult education do not do so.

There is a need in adult education research and theory to be more careful in the use of terms and concepts. For example, in much of Boshier's work, he makes the assumption that "reasons" are the same as "motives". They may indeed be the same, but many reasons given for participation may mask the "real motives" for participation. I suspect that motives operate at a different level within the individual and may not be amenable to direct measurement as assumed by the Likert-type scale used in the E.P.S. It may be that recourse may have to be made to techniques which are more "projective" in nature.

McClusky's Power/Load-Margin Model

McClusky moves beyond the Skinnerian stimulus-response learning reductionist approach, by the insertion of the organism (O) in the S-R model. The 'O' refers to the mediating activities of the human organism, where the human organism interprets and gives meaning to the stimulus presented. McClusky ascribes a central role in any learning to the processes of perception, particularly selective attention. Kahneman (1973) has shown that individuals attend to their world selectively, and in a very real sense, "choose" the stimuli that they will attend to. The other important contribution of Kahneman is that he argues convincingly that attentional processes require effort.

McClusky rightly points out that the imposition of structure on external (and internal) events, that is attending selectively to stimuli; organising and investing the perceived stimuli with meaning; is clearly a function of the needs, dispositions and set that the individual brings into the situation. If the situation is perceived as extremely demanding, the individual must marshal his resources to meet these demands or loads. Some individuals do well and do better than others; some cope with extremely demanding, complex environments and feel frustrated if they are not under pressure, sometimes to the extent of creating or generating additional loads for themselves. Others, however, cope best when the loads upon them are not so great, and if placed under pressure, may crack and not cope at all well, with concomitant losses in performance, efficiency and self-esteem. McClusky's powerful insight is in terms of attempting to formulate the new concept of margin, which he considers to be a function of the load imposed upon a person and the resources that that person has, in order to cope with that load. He puts it thus:

> By Load we mean the demands made on a person by self and society. By Power we mean the resources, i.e. abilities, possessions, position, allies, etc., which a person can command in coping with Load. Margin (surplus Power) may be increased by reducing Load or increasing Power, or it may be decreased by increasing Load and/or reducing Power. We can control both by modifying either Power or Load. When Load continually matches or exceeds Power and if both are fixed and/or out

> of control or irreversible, the situation becomes highly vulnerable and susceptible to breakdown. If, however, Load and Power can be controlled, and better yet, if a person is able to lay hold of a reserve (Margin) of Power, he is better equipped to meet unforeseen emergencies, is better positioned to take risks, can engage in exploratory, creative activities, is more likely to learn, etc., do those things that enable him to live above a plateau of mere self subsistence.
>
> (McClusky, 1970)

He parallels his notion of load with that of stress, and with the idea of input (from communication theory). Load can occur where individuals have difficulty in making sense of what is happening around them; where they are continually being confronted with stimuli that are perceived as being ambiguous (for example when in a double-bind situation). Power, he considers, is analogous to "resilience", the capacity to recover from expenditure, depletion or exhaustion. Power is also related to the effective use of resources - somewhat akin to the Freudian notion of "ego-strength", (see also Weathersby's (1981) use of the term and its application in education). Margin is the surplus power available and is related to how efficient the individual is. The efficient individual is one who is coping with the minimum amount of effort, and who as a result has surplus power at his disposal. Unfortunately, having excess power does not automatically ensure that the individual is prepared to take risks and engage in exploratory creative behaviour. Something additional is required, and this needs to be explored; it is not covered by the model.

McClusky attempts to relate his formulation to the ages and stages of adult development. Some of his notions are now quite dated (for example, modern research indicates that there is no diminution of I.Q. with aging). However, the general tenor of his comments relating to the notion that each stage requires differing coping skills is correct as far as he goes. Erickson (1963) and Kohlberg (1973), among others argue that there are qualitative changes from stage to stage, and that they are epigenetic in nature. This may be implied in the notions of McClusky, in that he argues that the skills learned at one stage in the life cycle may be inappropriate at another, presumably later, lifestage. These general ideas have empirical support in a way, from the task-analysis work of Fleishman (1957), who showed that the skills required to cope with a new task efficiency once the initial learning had been accomplished. This suggests, and personal experience of working with adults confirms this, that once the initial requirements/skills/demands of adult learning have been overcome (getting to know the rules, and perhaps the rules about the rules?), many adults remark on how easy, relative to their expectations, coping with adult learning has been. Some even feel cheated!

Main (1979) relates the McClusky model to the teaching of adults in a very constructive way. He is in effect using the McClusky model as a jumping-off point for the generation of new theory. He suggests a number of phases within his teaching-learning model, each with its own methodology. For example, in an exploration of the Power/Load-Margin formula, he would use "co-operative diagnostics between learner and agent" to determine the working "margin". Main, unfortunately, does not tell us what the diagnostic

tool is. He outlines (p. 30) a number of potential areas of Load and Power which group members, individually or collectively, explore in relation to the model to determine whether or not they have surplus power. It is this lack of precision, this lack of empirical veracity, which may lead to the casting out of this potentially powerful set of ideas on the rubbish-tip of adult education theory. Egan has outlined what he calls a force-field analysis approach to problem-solving, which may be of some help in this regard (Egan, 1975). But, the fundamental problem remains, how can the notions of Power and Load be measured reliably and validly?

The suggestion implicit in this model, and made explicit in the Boshier model, is that those under pressure, and who in the extreme may have a Load greater than the Power available to them (Boshier's "deficiency" types?) are the ones least likely to participate in adult continuing education. Not only that, but they are unlikely to have the resources to "bootstrap" themselves out of their present predicament through participating in continuing education. It could be that a significant portion of those not enrolled in continuing education are those who have Load/Power difficulties. This is a hypothesis which could be constructively pursued.

It does suggest that an understanding of the way in which adults perceive their world, and the way in which they allocate priorities among all the possible activities they could be involved in, (whether this is in terms of merely coping and maintaining their present situation or not) may give clues as to those individuals likely to enrol in continuing education. The decision-making model of Niemi and Niemi (1978) may be useful, except that in McClusky's terms, the focus of the Niemi and Niemi theory is primarily on the "Load" part of the formula. However, if the detailed analysis they give can be applied to the "Power" element in McClusky's formula, then both would have been enriched.

Expectancy-Valence Models of Participation in Adult Education

The expectancy-valence models of participation in adult education tend to assume completely rational behaviour on the part of the potential enrollee, in the sense that the expectations that the individual has for participating have been articulated and are therefore known. Expectancy, for Rubenson (1977), relates to the individuals' beliefs that they will complete the continuing education programme, and that this will have certain desired outcomes. This suggests that the individual has, on the one hand, some idea of his or her skills, competencies, abilities and "stickability" successfully to negotiate the course, or at least believe that the combination of traits possessed give a high probability of completing the course successfully. This suggests also that the individual has weighed up his or her strengths and weaknesses in relation to knowledge of the course content, requirements and demands (after McClusky?). On the other hand, expectancy implies some knowledge of a possible "career" trajectory which will tend to flow from the successful completion of the course or programme. Inter-related with the notion of "expectancy" is the idea of "valence", a recognition that participation in adult education is frequently seen as a conceivable way of satisfying needs. Valence has, according to Rubenson, a strong affective component and is related to the anticipated satisfaction from taking a particular course of action.

Bergsten (1980) outlines a model in which he relates the notions of valence and expectancy to participation in adult education as outcomes of the tension between work and leisure roles, and their inter-relationship with experienced needs. He argues that his model is a historical and, as such, an individual's behaviour has to be seen in the light of changes in beliefs about the current environment, rather than from changes in the strengths of past habits. Events and incidents which have occurred previously are of interest to the extent that they modify present conditions. Hence the emphasis is on the actual life situation and its relationship to participation in adult education. The model does not draw attention to the conflicts which arise within the individual, or between the individual and the environment. Valence is itself, for example, the result of, among other things, the assessing of the satisfaction associated with a course of action in relation to the competing anticipated satisfactions of many other courses of action and activity. Needs as experienced within the individual may be hierarchically structured on the basis of some intuitive cost-benefit, opportunity-cost "analysis".

The emphasis on the present is a useful reminder that there may be predispositions to act based on broad S.E.S. and other factors, together with traits such as intrinsic curiosity, and so on, but the "decision" to enter adult education activities may primarily be a function of the existential relationship between the individual and his environment. The other contribution the model makes is the recognition that any decision to participate in continuing education is made in competition with other interests, needs and so on. Adult education participants do not operate in a vacuum; they tend to have competing interests which may have a stronger valence for them. The economics concept of opportunity-cost implicit in the model I believe is valuable, in a static kind of way, for drawing attention to the fact that competition does exist, and that participation in one activity inhibits participation in other activities.

It may have been more appropriate in the model to have opted for a "life-style" approach rather than to have made the arbitrary distinction between work and leisure roles. It is significant that within the model, Bergsten departs from the phenomenon field approach by inserting the distinction between current work and leisure roles, the individual's perception and interpretation of these roles. In making that distinction, Bergsten could have explored the potential conflict between actual and perceived roles, and the effect this was likely to have on participation. If the incongruence between the two was too great, in Boshier's terms, or if the conflict reduced the potential margin (power over load) in McClusky's terms, then this may have implications not only for participation per se, but also for the nature of the activities entered into.

Rubenson (1983) tries to relate his valence/expectancy model to the analysis of perceived barriers to participation in adult education. He sees his model as a fruitful departure "to understand the individual's psychological apparatus - i.e. the individual's decision-making process". But he points out that knowledge about how the individual interprets the world cannot by itself give an understanding of the barriers to participation. He therefore argues for the inclusion of structural factors within society, and the interaction between them and the psychological make-up of the individual in any analysis of the barriers to participation in continuing education. An individual's decision to participate or not

will, he believes, depend to a large extent on earlier socialisation; the hierarchical nature of work; values of member and reference groups; and the way in which the demand factors govern the supply of adult education. He points out that the demand for adult education tends to come from those with high levels of education, and as such this makes it extremely difficult to divert adult education resources to underprivileged groups within society.

Rubenson is not really saying anything new here. The "vicious circle" of poor childhood conditions, short formal education, low educational standard, and the lack of control, inherent powerlessness, and their negative relationship to adult educational provision and participation, is well known. What is important is the comment relating to the nature of "generations" (Mannheim, 1936). Rubenson considers that mental structures are inevitably formed through the individuals existing in and being a part of society. Furthermore, differing sets of structures are formed in different societal and historical settings, and this may have implications for the ways in which individuals in different generations construe the nature of work; leisure; and the inter-relationship between the two. He also considers that individuals within a particular generation will have a characteristic stance towards issues which may flow at some stage into policy provisions. For example, those who went through the depression of the 1930s have an attitude to unemployment which may be different from that of the group presently unemployed. There are links between the experience of the Great Depression and the growth of welfare as an industry, particularly after World War II. I wonder what the effect of the present unemployment situation, in a "welfare state", will be on welfare and other policies in the year 2000. Miller's (1967) Force-Field Analysis of participation in adult education has been included in this section because of its use of the Lewinian force-field notion, implicit at least in all the expectancy-valence models discussed above. Notwithstanding the comments of Cross (1981), Miller's model is more descriptive than explanatory. Miller recognises that participation is a function of competing desires and options and, as it is a voluntary activity, represents an individual's commitment in time and energy. The willingness to enter some kind of adult education activity demonstrates some personal need, and these needs are shaped by environmental forces.

Participatory behaviour then is a function of the positive and negative forces existing in the individual's life-space at a particular point in time. These positive and negative forces tend, however, to be broadly sociological and normative, perhaps, in nature. Miller's theorising is congruent with the later theorising of Rubenson (1983).

The heavy reliance of much of the adult education participation research on Maslow's hierarchy of needs model has been criticised by Long (1983). He believes the needs model of Maslow to be suspect, and as Miller's model is largely dependent on Maslow's hierarchy, it suffers as a consequence. The broad generality of the model appears to leave little room for individual action in the decision to participate in continuing education activities. Its importance lies in ensuring that those who are more concerned with individual functioning take into account the broader spectrum within which individual action takes place.

Neither the Miller model nor the other expectancy-valence type models of Bergsten and Rubenson, however, really identify the processes by which individuals come to decide whether or not they will participate in adult education. There are, furthermore, obvious difficulties even in identifying what the expectations and valences are, let alone measuring them with any precision. The phenomenal map tends to be somewhat static; it provides a photographic slide of the individual at a particular point in time, and as such tends not to focus on the dynamics of decision-making. Nor is it able to indicate how the individual comes to take the all-important step of enrolling in a programme of activities. Other areas requiring further research include generational perspectives on key issues, and the effects that possible mis-matches may have in policy-making. How individuals resolve conflicts within their lives, how they allocate priorities among competing activities and interests, needs to be investigated. In addition, research into the "degrees of freedom" to act within various stages of the life-cycle may assist in the understanding of the decision-making processes individuals engage in. The expectancy-valence models may have a contribution to make, and have relevance for those individuals who have to participate as a result of their work situation. Miller may be incorrect when he argues that adult education participation is a voluntary activity. Current research indicates strong instrumentality in the need to enrol in adult education (Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982) whether for vocational or family reasons. The question of voluntary or "forced" participation in adult education needs further investigation.

Cross' Chain-of-Response Model (COR)

Cross (1981) sets out the beginnings, of what she calls "a conceptual framework designed to identify the relevant variable and hypotheses and their interrelationships". She recognises that her model is a long way from being able to predict who will participate in continuing education activities, but believes it may be useful in both organising existing knowledge and suggesting more sharply focussed research projects which will add to the growing fund of knowledge.

However, internal to the model is a series of relationships which suggest linearity, and hence to that extent prediction is involved. It could be that her model would be more powerful if it had Guttman-type scale characteristics such that a person in a later stage of the model would have probably already moved through the earlier stages. This would involve a degree of invariance in the stage sequence, which, she may feel, might limit the generalisability of her model.

The first two stages in the model are concerned with "internal elements", attitudes towards education and self-evaluation. As most individuals in western-type societies have had the common experience of at least primary schooling, and some secondary schooling, the thesis is that the nature of experience is reflected in attitudes to oneself and to education. Success at school, however defined, contributes to self-esteem and a propensity to want more of those things which made one feel good - in this case, education.

Again to be sure that this thesis holds, there needs to be research which identified those who have high self-esteem and yet do not participate, and those who participate but have low self-esteem. The relationship between

the ideas is plausible, but then so are many of the myths surrounding adult education. What exactly does success at school mean? Does it mean academic success; prowess on the sporting field; good inter-personal relationships with staff and other students; a combination of all these? This is not specified. Satisfaction with secondary or even tertiary education may not be related to participation in continuing education, and its links with self-esteem have yet to be explored.

At a more practical level it is difficult, for instance, to estimate the impact of schooling on later involvement in continuing education programmes, particularly if the individual has had significant learning experiences in child-rearing; through personal trauma and crises; through involvement in the community and so on, at an informal level, as well as through the more easily identifiable formal learning experiences since leaving school. The enormous amount of research on self-esteem suggests that there are at least two components - a core set of feelings that an individual has towards self, and the more transient, day-to-day or even moment-to-moment feeling an individual may be experiencing. Furthermore, there may be significant differences between individuals in terms of their sensitivity to internal states, and the willingness to let these be known. Women for example outnumber men, somewhere in the region of ten to one, in making self-referrrals to marriage-guidance clinics. Women's self-esteem often takes a battering at school, yet enrolment in continuing education courses tends to be predominantly female.

Step C in the model picks up the work of the expectancy-valence model-makers. The new point in the model is part D which looks at some of the triggers which impel individuals into continuing education. These are the transitional triggers, those life-events which precipitate self-evaluation. Cross acknowledges the contribution of Aslanian and Brickell (1980), who identify a number of transitions which individuals indicated had some relationship to their involvement in continuing education. The Aslanian and Brickell research methodology actively sought for triggering events, so it is not surprising that they obtained the results that they did. Triggering events may feature significantly in precipitating active involvement in some form of continuing education, but research into this area ought to look at other activities which people undertook in reaction to some triggering stimulus or event.

Cross points to the crucial role of information in assisting individuals who may want to participate in continuing education. But more than information is required. There needs to be a place for the adult educator to be involved in consciousness-raising, sensitising the public to issues, thus enabling individuals to be aware of the existing hegemonies inherent in much of modern-day living (MacLean, 1982). Adult educators, perhaps like other "caring professionals", ought to be involved in the process of "norm-broking" (MacLean, 1980); of articulating the "hidden" of being an interface between sections of the community. This radical perspective need not be destructive. It may be very constructive in enabling individuals to confront and overcome the barriers to participation. Barriers are of course covert as well as overt, but both may provide opportunities for individuals and agencies involved in continuing education to develop new ways of securing participation in adult education.

Cross hopes that her model will stimulate thinking and the development of new theory in the area of adult education, with the possibility that practice will be enhanced. The linearity in Cross' model may be more apparent than real. However, her emphasis initially on self-evaluation may be unproductive particularly in the light of the Aslanian and Brickell research which found that the movement to a new status frequently "triggers" the need for learning. Transitional events were mentioned by 83% of their sample as crucial in determining involvement in continuing education. In other words, for a significiant number of participants in adult education, self-evaluation followed a "triggering" event, not the other way round. The model is useful in drawing attention to some of the significant areas of research in the adult education field that require further investigation. Other frameworks may be equally useful in generating research possibilities through the offering of different perspectives, and raising different kinds of questions.

The Darkenwald and Merriam Psychosocial Interaction Model

There are similarities between the Cross (1981) model and that presented by Darkenwald and Merriam. Their model appears to be linear, but unlike Cross' model concentrates more on the social-environmental forces that have an effect on the decision-making dynamics, making the assumption that the individual is a product of the interaction of his characteristics (gender, I.Q. etc); familial and social class (of origin) socialisation processes. This emphasis, they argue, is not because individual traits and attitudes are unimportant, but because less is known about their influence on participation in adult education (Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982).

These initial socialisation processes set up an orientation towards education and lifelong learning which may be modified in adulthood, particularly, I suspect, through S.E.S. destination and aspirations, and the learning-press from the immediate environment the maturing adult finds himself in. The model does not distinguish between S.E.S. or origin and S.E.S. destination; the distinction is one that I have drawn. If the learning-press favours continuing education (or for that matter any other activity), the individual appraises the situation in terms of its perceived value and utility, in much the same way as suggested by the expectancy-valence theorists. If the belief is that continuing education has utility and so on, the individual enters a "readiness to participate" phase. This may not be enough to guarantee participation. Frequently there needs to be a "triggering" event or incident which will overcome the perceived barriers to participation.

The themes inherent in the model proposed by Darkenwald and Merriam appear to be similar to those of other theorists. There is great reliance on the processes of perception and in particular selective attention. There is a recognition of the powerful effects of early socialisation in predisposing an individual to participate, or otherwise, in continuing education. The importance of existential pressures and trigger events in precipitating individuals to act is underlined. Furthermore, there is an acknowledgement of the appraisal function in determining expectancy and the valency of one course of action as against other competing, viable alternatives.

Their model, like most of the others reviewed here, tends more to description rather than prescription. They suggest that their model contains the "dynamics of participation" but this is scarcely true. The dynamics are not explored systematically, and they acknowledge this by stating that the model depicts general relationships of a variable or probabilistic nature.

The following section summarises the models reviewed, emphasising those elements which are considered to be important in developing alternative perceptions of adult participation in continuing education.

Summary

All of the models reviewed above owe allegiance to some extent to the ideas of Kurt Lewin. All make the assumption that the individual inhabits a psychological lifespace within which he acts according to his interpretation of internal and external stimuli. Behaviour is seen as the outcome or function of the interaction between the internal and the external. Some of the models tend to focus on internal events to some extent, others on external events primarily, and others attempt to capture the dynamics of the interplay between the external and the internal.

Boshier, for example, in the first two steps of his model is concerned with the identification of categories of individuals - the "growth" and "deficiency" oriented - and argues that placement in either of these two categories has implications in terms of tendencies towards congruence or incongruence respectively. Congruent individuals are more likely to persist in continuing education, whilst those who are "deficiency" oriented, and hence more likely to be incongruent, are likely to be continuing education drop-outs, or at best spasmodic in their participation. The instruments utilised by Boshier are, however, suspect, and therefore care needs to be taken in accepting that his empirical work supports his model. Incongruence can be regarded as a "disturbance" in an individual's phenomenonal field, in that there are discrepancies of perception in key areas of the individual's sets of beliefs about himself, and how he would like to see himself; others; and educational institutions. If the discrepancy is large enough, the individual may resolve the "conflict" by opting out of the continuing education enterprise.

The McClusky model, likewise, is phenomenonal in nature. The concept of margin is a function of the load the individual perceives himself to be carrying, and the resources he believes he has to meet that load at a particular point in time. The problem with both these models is that at times the margin or discrepancy may be outside the awareness of the individual. Neither model recognises this "out of awareness" element, although in the case of the Boshier model, the concept of motivation, itself, has connotations of elements hidden from or out of the awareness of the individual. The reasons for engaging upon adult education activities may be quite different from the underlying motives for such involvement. With the McClusky model, an individual may have difficulty, and I guess all do, in accurately assessing his or her strengths and weaknesses in order to come to some decision about the respective weightings to be attributed to each.

The expectancy-valence models also tend to assume rational behaviour, in the sense that both expectations and valences can be articulated, therefore known, and subsequently acted upon. The resultant of these two differing assessments, one largely cognitive and the other largely 'affective', culminates in the decision to participate in continuing education or other activity. The Miller model attempts to account for some of the major environmental pressures which orient individuals towards participation. There is recognition that social factors inhibit participation. This point is echoed by Rubenson who highlights the demand-push from the higher S.E.S. groups for more education, thus limiting the resources available to underprivileged groups, and exacerbating the growing gap between those who have and those who do not.

The two linear models of Cross (1981) and Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) are useful in terms of their descriptions of various phases in the process of becoming a participant in adult education. The Darkenwald and Merriam model may be better thought of as pyramidal in shape, the widest base, and with most pervasive influence, being the early family and social factors, which interact with the skills, abilities, capacities, etc. of the growing individual giving a broad orientation towards or away from education. Above this level, if we accept that S.E.S. of origin and the early socialisation processes do not completely determine future action, lie the S.E.S. aspirations and possible destinations, which together with the immediate environmental "learning-press" have the effect of "turning the face" once more to education, perhaps. Like the Cross model, triggering events or stimuli, providing the barriers are not too great, may have the effect of impelling the individual into participating in adult education.

Several features appear to be common to most of the models reviewed above. There is, first of all, an emphasis on perception. Secondly, there appears to be tension between internal events and external forces; between sets of internal events; and between external sets of "encouragers" (for example, triggering events, pressures from the world of work) and "inhibitors" (barriers to participation), which has consequences for participation. Thirdly, there is an emphasis on "rationality", or at least on the belief that somehow the individual is in control, is autonomous, and has some freedom to act, and has the ability to make decisions. Fourthly, most models appear to be linearly causal in nature, and little attention has been paid to the calculus of the interaction.

With the strong emphasis on perception in all the models, it is surprising that so little attention has been paid to the way in which the individual interprets his world, and whether or not individuals adopt characteristic ways of construing the world. Witkin, for instance, believe that individuals tend along a continuum of differentiation. That is, at one end of the continuum, individuals are strongly analytic, having the ability to disregard distracting stimuli and to zero in on a problem. These field independents, high scorers on the embedded figures test, the rod-and-frame test, and so on, tend to move into the hard-nosed sciences, mathematics and physics, and may feel uncomfortable where information, data and knowledge are not well packaged and highly organised. On the other hand, the low scorers on the Witkin measures are called field-dependents. They seem unusually susceptible to distracting stimuli. They tend to be more at home in the human sciences, and may enter professions such as social work, and any of the "caring" professions. Witkin has discussed (with empirical

data) the effects of field independents being taught by field dependents, and vice versa. It appears that marked incongruence between the individual's cognitive style and the tutor may lead to a degree of discomfort and affect performance, if not actively encourage drop-out (Witkin, 1973). The laissez-faire approach of many adult education tutors may be stressful to field independents. The effect of cognitive style discrepancies between the individual participant, his teacher and class environmental variables may be a far more potent predictor of drop-out than any of the motivational variables explored to date.

Witkin's model can be criticised on a number of grounds however. These traits or stylistic tendencies tend to be stable over time, with a suggestion that with age individuals become more analytic. However, much of his work has been with instruments that have analytic demand characteristics. What is needed is a measure which has inherent demand characteristics that are not analytic but synthetic. That is, the individual has to create meaning out of bits and pieces which make up the stimulus. This is a trait which I believe is orthogonal to the analytic tasks used by Witkin. It may well be that field independent individuals (some at least) will do equally well on these synthetic tasks, as they did on the analytic tasks. There is a suggestion from the perception research that analysis and synthesis involve different levels of information processing.

Therefore there exists a fourfold typology of "perceptual-types", ignoring for the moment those in the middle of the two continua.

1...high analytic	and	high synthetic
2...high analytic	and	low synthetic
3...low analytic	and	high synthetic
4...low analytic	and	low synethic

The identification of these types, and their relationships to participation and drop-out in adult education, is being investigated. But, this is not sufficient in and of itself. What is also required is research into an individual's preferred mode of operating, and more importantly perhaps, whether the individual is able to move from one mode to another relatively easily and without impairment of performance and potency. It may be that the margin problems of Load and Power, in McClusky's model, may be a function of the inability of individuals to shift from one mode of cognitive style to another as demanded by the stimuli being encountered.

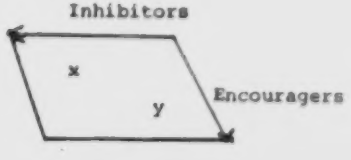
The suggestion here is that if the fundamental sine qua non of human functioning is selective attention, then adult educators ought to be concerned enough to attempt to discover whether or not stylistic tendencies and preferred modes of relating to the world have any impact on participation in adult education. For instance, field independence tends to be encouraged by the school system; the heavy emphasis on science and mathematics in the school syllabus; the heavy use of reason and argument indicates, perhaps that those who prefer a "field-dependent mode" may be discriminated against, and their feelings of discomfort may be such that they opt out of a particular curriculum area (for example, girls away from mathematics and physics) or out of the education system altogether.

In an information society (Stonier, 1983) it may well be that those who succeed are those individuals who can take disparate pieces of information and use them to establish some kind of gestalt. Managers are increasingly being called upon to use their judgement based on incomplete information, and yet much, if not all, management training, at both undergraduate and graduate level, emphasises analytical skills and competencies, and largely ignores the 'gestalt operations' involved in 'synthesis'. These ideas are speculative, and as Boshier appreciates, need empirical support.

The second set of ideas I would like to explore, and which may prove to be helpful in the creation of new theory in the adult education field, emanates from Catastrophe Theory (C.T.). What C.T. can do is open some of the doors which may have been closed albeit partially by the linear models. The impulse to participate in adult education, as Aslanian and Brickhill assert, frequently arises from a discontinuity (Postle, 1980). More importantly, C.T. can account for "smooth change" as well as sudden changes. Postle gives the following example:

> We are sometimes relaxed enough to change our opinions about events or other people but at other times, perhaps because we feel anxious, we become locked into rigid positions from which we move only after a crisis.
> (Postle, 1980: 19)

The following is an attempt to utilise C.T. to visualise the participation process from another point of view. The diagrams and the C.T. model can be made more complicated if the perceptual variable - cognitive style - is added. However, this model picks up much of the expectancy-valency notions, as well as the McClusky ideas of Power, Load and Margin, in a different way. In making a decision to participate in continuing education, the individual has to balance up the pros and cons. Each variable under consideration has cognitive and affective elements, and the tensions between the pros and cons may result in "fixation" and vacillation, or it may result in the decision to participate or note. There are broad categories of variables that invite the individual to participate (encouragers), and there are those barriers to participation identified by many of the model-makers (inhibitors). These can be graphed in such a way that any point on the surface of the graph represents the relative strength of one vis-a-vis the other.



Point x high inhibitors and low encouragers

Point y high encouragers and low inhibitors

Fig.1

But the concern is not only with encouragers and inhibitors. It is with the behaviour that is related to the relationship between encouragers and inhibitors. There is therefore, a third, vertical, dimension, so that each combination of influences corresponds to a particular level or amount of behaviour. According to Postle, C.T. suggests that this will take the form of a folded surface in three dimensions: not just any folded shape, but one special category of surface which is smooth at one end and folded over at the other (see fig. 2).

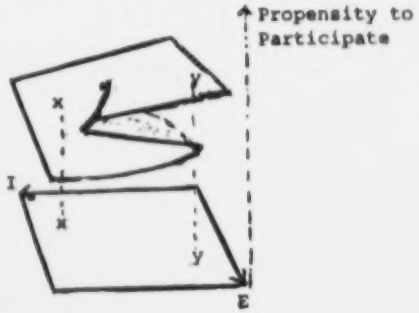


Fig. 2

Any point on the lower surface represents a single combination of encouragers and inhibitors, and above it a point or points on the behaviour surface represent the corresponding amount of strength of participatory behaviour. The lower surface is a surface that represents the interaction of the variables; the upper surface represents a "map" of the resulting behaviour.

As there is a relative increase in the encouragers over the inhibitors, particularly in the region of the fold, the cusp, there is a large jump or catastrophe in the propensity to participate, akin perhaps to the triggering that has been mentioned previously as precipitating participation. Figure 3 shows this in schematic form. As the individual moves from p through x across the cusp, there is the sudden jump to y, and into participation.

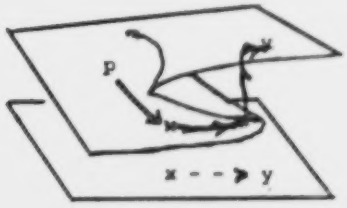


Fig. 3

Without being so bold as to suggest that this model more than describes the participation process, the C.T. approach does recognise more than any other to date the calculus of the decision-making process, and the recognition that it is often "the straw that breaks the camel's back". A small change in circumstances can either precipitate an individual into continuing education; cause them to drop-out; or turn them away from enrolling. C.T. does provide a tool that may enable new perspectives on the participation process to be formed. The application of C.T. to participation needs a great deal more exploration than is possible in this paper.

How encouragers and inhibitors are defined may be a function of the individual's cognitive style, recognising, of course, that what may be an encourager for one person may be an inhibitor for another. It may well be that cognitive style may be a more fruitful avenue for research than participation research based on S.E.S., because inherent in the notion of cognitive style is the possibility of differential provision of courses, content, and environments. This together with differential marketing techniques may be sufficient to trigger participation of many under-privileged groups into continuing education. The OECD (1973) concern for equity in the distribution of adult education provision needs to be borne in mind by policy-makers. The needs for further research and theory-building in adult education is obvious. C.T. and cognitive style provide differing perspectives which may be useful. Perhaps, with a great deal of effort and goodwill, the conceptual desert can be made to bloom.

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ADULT EDUCATION PARTICIPATION ON THE NORTH COAST OF NEW SOUTH WALES

R.J. Prater

In other western countries (notably the United States, England and Wales, Ireland, Canada, and many Western European countries) adult educators, policy-makers, politicians, and others with interest in adult education can rely upon national or provincial surveys of participation in adult education as a basis for formulating submissions, making policy decisions, and delivering a service to meet community needs.

Australian counterparts have suffered the handicap of being deprived of this essential information. When responding to international requests for data they have been forced to rely upon 'guesstimates', unreliable figures provided by agencies (enrolment statistics are subject to the likelihood of multiple-counting), government reports, and subjective essays, leading a recent major international study to conclude that 'systematic and comprehensive data regarding adult education programs, opportunities and participation are either incomplete or unavailable'.[1]

Reviews of participation studies in Australia have shown that research previously conducted has been limited to studies of participants in particular institutional programmes.[2, 3] There are however, two needs-assessment or market surveys, conducted by the regional multi-purpose Colleges of Advanced Education[4] and the New England Rural Development Association study of adult learning needs on the Northern Tablelands of NSW.[5] However, neither of these two studies sampled existing participation patterns.

The study reported here is an initial effort to remedy the inadequate database for adult education in Australia, and to develop an appropriate instrument, methodology, and research agenda for participation studies in Australia.

The study had two purposes. First, to describe the characteristics of those participating in adult education, and to identify the agencies they patronised and the subjects they studied, and, conversely, the characteristics of those not participating, including the barriers to access experienced by them. The second purpose was to determine the future demand for adult education, including the subjects adults wish to study and their preferences with respect to their participation.

PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY

The study examined the involvement in adult education of a representative sample of adults from three types of communities on the North Coast of New South Wales.

The North Coast region, one of ten regions defined by the New South Wales Government, is bounded on the east by the Pacific Ocean, north by Queensland, west by the New England region and south by the Hunter region. It is an area of 35,861 square kilometres, 4.47 percent of the area of New

South Wales. It is an elongated coastal strip, 500 kilometres long and between 80 and 120 kilometres wide. The region is divided into 18 local government areas and, in the 1982 census, had a total population of 292,760 persons (of whom 192,062 were adults over the age of 18 years).

A population boom began in the North Coast region in 1966, with the total population of the region growing from 211,842 to 227,500 in 1971 to 251,104 in 1976.[6] It was 292,760 in the latest census.[7] In 1981 there was an annual average rate of increase in the population of 4.12 percent for the Mid-North Coast statistical sub-division, and 3.31 percent for the Richmond-Tweed statistical sub-division, which compares to a rate of increase for the State of 1.09 percent.[8]

DEFINITIONS AND STANDARDISATION OF DATA

The use of internationally-accepted definitions provides maximum compatibility with the findings of other studies. Unesco's International Standard Classification of Education[9] was adopted in the following definitions: Education refers to organised and sustained communication designed to bring about learning. Adult Education means education provided for the benefit of and adapted to the needs of persons generally 18* years and over not a part of the regular school, TAFE, CAE or university system. Adult education includes any organised educational activity, including classes, workshops, correspondence courses, or mass media-based instruction.

Self-directed Learning refers to any deliberate learning that occurs through individual attempts to satisfy their learning needs within educational activities which they plan for themselves (eg, through conversation, reading, consultation, correspondence), and excludes the incidental learning that occurs from nearly all experiences in everyday life.

The participation status of respondents to the community sample survey was defined in terms of involvement in agency-based adult education. This variable is independent of the respondents' involvement in self-directed learning.

Three types of participation status were recognised:

1. A Participant was any adult (person over the age of 18) who had taken part in some form of organised adult education in the past twelve months, irrespective of whether they had been involved in any self-directed learning, and irrespective of the person's status as a full-time student.[10] This definition is not as exclusive as that of Johnstone and Rivera[11] which sets an irreducible minimum of four meetings to satisfy the condition of an acceptable sequence or cycle, nor does the definition require any qualitative dimension of persistence, such as the participant completing the course.

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* The age that distinguishes an adult from a pre-adult has been altered from Unesco's 15 to 18, on the basis of the survey sample being drawn from local government electoral rolls which include all residents over the age of 18.

2. A Would-be-Participant was an adult who had not in the past twelve months taken part in an adult education activity but who expressed interest in undertaking such in the next year or two.

3. A Non-Participant was an adult who had not taken part in any adult education activity in the past twelve months and who did not intend to engage in any such activity within the next two years.

Participants, Would-be-Participants and Non-Participants may or may not have been engaged in self-directed learning.

A distinction was made between a Participant identified in the community-based sample survey and a Registrant of the clientele survey, both to identify the different sampling techniques, and as some adults engage in more than one educational activity in a year.

DATA COLLECTION

A two-phase model incorporating a community sample survey and a multi-agency clientele survey.[12]

The Community Sample Survey

A sample survey was conducted in the months of August and September 1982, through personal interviews with 402 residents of three local government areas in the region. The North Coast region has a population of 292,760 persons, of whom 192,062 are aged over 18 years,[13] resident in 17 local government areas which can be broadly categorised into shires of three community types:

1. Coastal: larger (8,000 to 20,000 persons), rapidly growing coastal communities with a tourist orientation;

2. Inland: stable inland cities/towns based on a service function;

3. Hinterland: hinterland villages and smaller (up to 4,000 persons) coastal villages.

A representative shire was chosen from each of these types on the basis of ease of access and because recent local government by-elections had resulted in updated electoral rolls. The selected shires were: Coffs Harbour (coastal type); Kempsey (inland); and Bellingen (hinterland). A one percent sample was randomly selected from the electoral rolls.

Individuals selected for interview were forewarned by letter, and this reduced the sample by 25 cases where letters were returned to the sender for various reasons - because the subject was deceased, had moved from the area, or the address used was insufficient. The numbers thus lost were 18 (Coffs Harbour), four (Kempsey), and two (Bellingen). The survey was also reported in local newspapers, and by radio and television, prior to the interviews being carried out.

Interviewers were each given a list of names and addresses, and instructed to attempt to interview the person nominated, but, in the event of being unable to secure an interview (through either inability to contact the

subject or an outright refusal to participate), to select a neighbour - preferably of the same age and sex. The lists given to the interviewers would have resulted in a total sample of 482 responses (random sample less *letters returned to sender), 69 cases more than the required one percent* sample.

Overall, the number of refusals was small (29 cases, or seven percent of interviews attempted) and the interviewers in both Coffs Harbour and Bellingen shires secured their quota easily. An inexplicable reluctance on the part of some subjects to be involved, which had a demoralising effect on two of the interviewers, led to a less than one percent sample in the Kempsey shire.

The interviewers were selected on the basis of their having had previous experience in research in one of the social sciences, and their familiarity with adult education. In both Kempsey and Bellingen shires the interviewing team was closely affiliated with the local adult education committee, and at Coffs Harbour all of the interviewers had an involvement with the University of New England Regional Office.

Interviewers attended a two-hour training session, field tested the survey instrument, and were supervised throughout the project (which included a thorough check of the first five interviews completed, before proceeding with the remainder). They reported that both the introductory letter and media coverage of the survey were beneficial to their task.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument developed was largely based on that employed by Waniewicz[14] with modifications based on the studies by Carp et al.[15] Johnstone and Rivera[16], Blackburn[17], Dickinson and Verner[18], Goard and Dickinson[19].

Items were also added on: the adequacy of adult education publicity; preference for times to attend activities; learning motive; satisfaction with community services allied to adult education (eg, theatre, library, clubs and societies, sporting organisations); the existence of kin in the district; the number of hours worked on weekends; the length of residence in the district and the nature of the previous place of residence; and attitudes to education - adapted from the long form of the Minnesota Survey of Opinions[20].

The questionnaire consisted of five sections:

> Section 1: Participation Status - was completed by all respondents, and solicited information on the respondent's involvement in post-secondary education, training courses, and adult education, thereby allowing Participants to be identified.
>
> Section 2: Participants - was only completed by those respondents who had engaged in some adult education activity (excluding full-time post-secondary education) in the past twelve months, and comprised items about their learning, future educational plans, preferred mode of instruction, attitude to certification and counselling, knowledge of avenues for learning, and barriers to and motives for learning.

Section 3: Would-be Participants - was completed by those respondents who were not then, and had not been in the past twelve months, involved in any learning activities, but who expressed an interest in some kind of learning within the next two years. The items parallel those applicable in the second section.

Section 4: Non-Participants - was completed by those respondents who had not completed sections two and three, and comprised items on barriers to participation and knowledge of adult education.

Section 5: Basic Data - was completed by all respondents, and comprised items on self-directed learning, involvement in leisure and sporting activities, social participation, other socio-demographic variables, a second question on barriers, and respondent attitude to education.

Depending upon the participation status of the respondent, the questionnaire could be completed in three quarters of an hour for Participants, half an hour for Would-be-Participants, and 15 minutes for Non-Participants, although, as is often the case with interviewing, many interviews extended to almost double that time.

Representativeness of the Community Sample

The distribution of the sample was compared against four key variables (age, sex, country of birth, and household income) from the census data for the region. The overall chi-squared value for this comparison was 31.8 with 14 degrees of freedom, which is significant at the 0.02 level, indicating that the sample was not representative. One item makes a large contribution to the unrepresentativeness of the sample - the category of a country of origin other than Australia, which was overrepresented in the sample. More minor contributions are made by the overrepresentation of 40-49 year olds, and those with a household income of over $26,000.

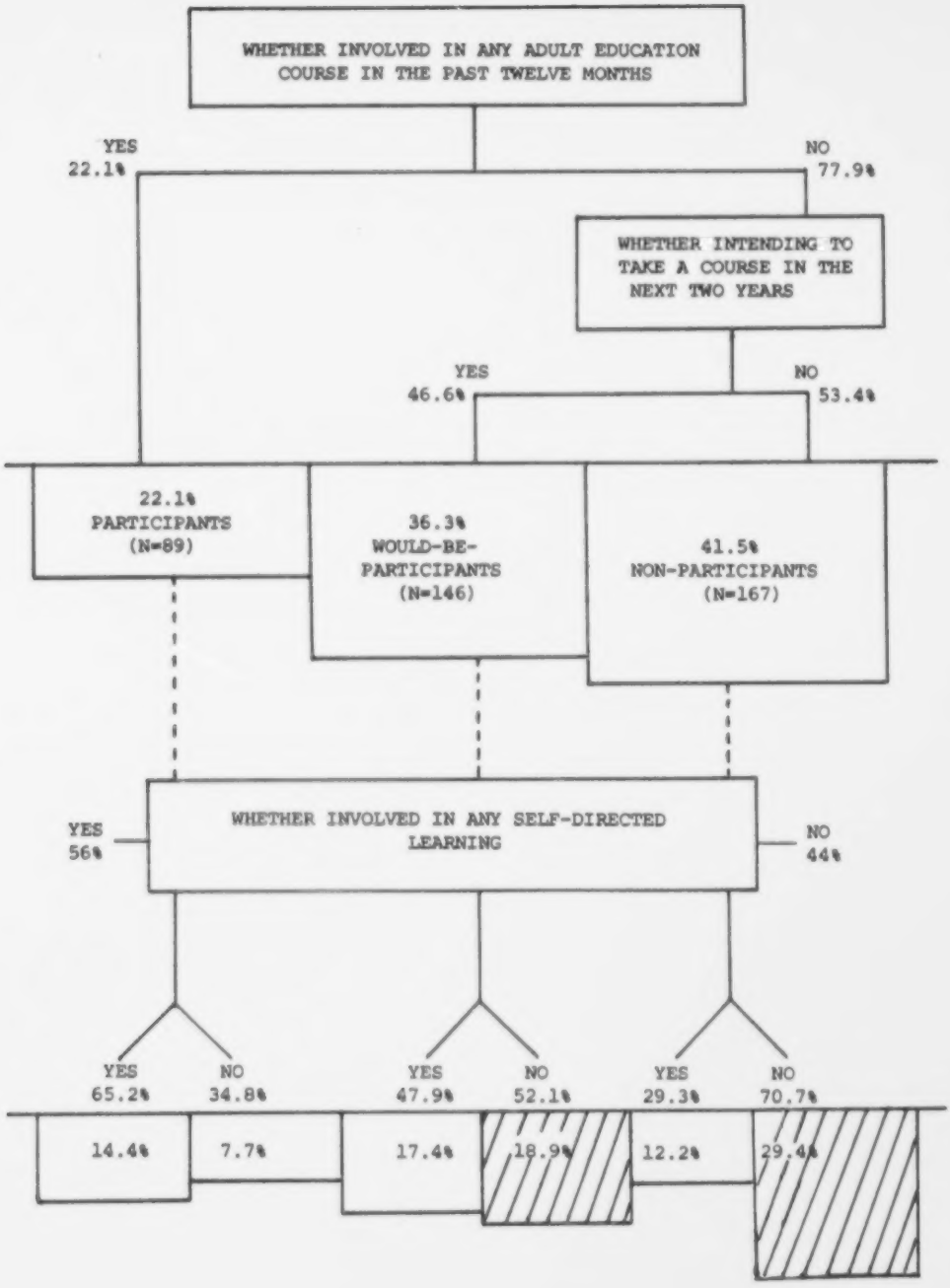
The Clientele Survey

A self-report questionnaire for completion by adult education participants, developed in a preliminary study[21], was distributed to agencies with an involvement in adult education. The form contained 13 items: sex, age, residence in region, source of information on course, country of birth, distance travelled to the course, postcode, employment status, occupation, age left school, educational attainment, adult education attendance, and reason for attending. In addition the instructor completed a sheet recording details of the course. Twenty-one agencies, of the 28 who could have used the forms, collected data from 1,863 Registrants attending 146 courses.

EXTENT OF LEARNING BY ADULTS

Twenty-two percent of the adults sampled were Participants. Twice as many adults as this (44 percent) engaged in self-directed learning. Of those adults not currently participating, under half were Would-be-Participants, comprising 36 percent of the sample. Just under half of the Would-be-Participants also engaged in self-directed learning. Non-Participants comprised 41 percent of the sample (Figure 1).

Fig. 1: Educational classification of the Community Survey respondents



Sixty-five percent of Participants were also self-directed learners, whereas 30 percent of Non-Participants were also self-directed learners.

Information collected on recency of involvement in adult education activities suggests that the condition of being a Non-Participant is not an aberration, with almost 70 percent of those not intending to participate having no previous involvement. For Would-be-Participants there were more lapsed participants, particularly people whose previous involvement was within the past five years (34 percent of the Would-be-Participants compared to nine percent of the Non-Participants) and necessarily fewer, 37 percent, who have never participated in agency-centred adult education.

Nearly 30 percent of the population had neither been involved in any form of adult learning (agency-centred or self-directed) nor indicated a likelihood of becoming involved in some learning, either agency-centred or self-directed, in the past twelve months, leaving 48 percent of those surveyed having not undertaken any adult learning in the past twelve months (the shaded groups in Figure 1).

TABLE 1: Previous Involvement in Adult Education of Would-be Participants and Non-Participants, as a percentage of the Community Survey respondents

LAST INVOLVED IN ADULT EDUCATION	WOULD-BE-PARTICIPANTS (N=121	NON-PARTICIPANTS (N=150)
1 to 2 years ago	10.7	2.7
3 to 5 years ago	23.1	6.7
6 to 10 years ago	6.3	4.7
11 to 20 years ago	14.0	8.0
21 to 30 years ago	5.8	6.0
Over 30 years ago	0.8	2.7
Never	37.2	69.3

AVENUES FOR ADULT EDUCATION

The study sought to identify the educational institutions or facilities patronised by adults. These avenues were categorised as formal educational institutions; work-related and/or employer-sponsored programmes; community and cultural organisations; clubs and societies; radio and television.

The first of these categories was divided into credit and non-credit provision, the other categories all being non-credit in nature. The relative popularity of the five categories revealed that just under 13 percent of the population was involved with formal agencies in non-credit courses, with a similar proportion (15%) reporting involvement via a club or society. When asked whether, during the past twelve months, they had attended any courses offered by the list of agencies under the heading 'Community and Cultural Organisations' ten percent (N=42) of respondents replied affirmatively. They identified 46 agencies, of which seven were Technical Colleges and one should actually have been coded under the Evening College category. The remaining 38 responses in order of frequency were: Department of Continuing Education, University of New England (12),

Community Youth Support Scheme (4), Health Commission (4), Chamber of Commerce (2), Department of Agriculture (2), a ceramic firm (2), with one response each for Save the Children's Fund, North Coast Staffing Centre, Bowls Club Umpires Lectures, Housing Industry Association, Reserve Army, Hospital, Bush Fire Brigade, Lodge, a yoga class, Child and Parent Support Services, Occuptional Therapy, Coffs Harbour Primary School, and a Knitwit Sewing course.

The total number of respondents who indicated involvement with an agency in one of the above categories was 169 (42% of the sample). This compares to the previously identified 22 percent participation rate. The discrepancy arises because the Participant group comprised those persons completing Section 2 of the questionnaire, which asked respondents to concentrate on non-credit learning, and was a more demanding measure of involvement in that it required respondents to identify the topics they were studying. Therefore, a respondent who was not involved in any agency-based adult education other than, for example, an external degree course, or a full-time TAFE trade course, was not regarded as a Participant, nor was a person who said he or she was involved in a club or society where learning about the area of interest played a large part in the activity, if later in the survey they could not identify the topic(s) they had been pursuing.

Over half of the respondents who recorded an involvement with an educational facility patronised more than one agency, with an average of two agencies patronised by each respondent currently participating.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE ADULT EDUCATION ENTERPRISE

Another aspect of the intensity of involvement of Participants is the number of topics that they reported studying in the past twelve months. The average number of topics studies was 2.3. If this figure is extrapolated to the adult population of the region, the projected enrolment for adult education activities is 97,200. Data collected from the Clientele Survey give an average course enrolment of 16 (a total enrolment of 2,239 being reported for 140 courses). By dividing the projected enrolment by the average course enrolment the total number of courses offered in the region is calculated to be 6,075.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Construction of a profile of those participating in adult education is a useful way of seeing which segments of the population are gaining easy access to adult education, and conversely, who is missing out. This type of analysis should not be misinterpreted as showing any causal relationship with the behaviour of participating.

Higher participation rates for women and for persons aged between 20 and 40 years; the dramatic decline in participation after age 65 years; and the strong positive relationship between both prior formal education and social participation: all as found are consistent with other studies.

Some findings which add new data on the participation phenomenon are the higher rates for newcomers (and in particular those migrating from a metropolitan area); participation of friends and family; perception of participation by neighbours; and type of leisure involvement.

Variables which had been supposed to be related to participation, but which were not found to show any superficial relationship were: living situation; presence of kin in district; and attitudes to education[22].

RELATIVE IMPACT OF FACTORS ON PARTICIPATION BEHAVIOUR

A significant relationship between participation status and 14 of the variables was indicated by the chi-square test of statistical significance. Positive relationships were found for prior formal education, employment, status, occupation, recency of residence, social participation, participation of peers, involvement of other residents, and the five leisure types. A negative relationship with participation was found for age, and living situation.

The utility of the Chi-square test is limited to examining in isolation the relationship between two variables. For example, the high association between participation and both recency of residence and educational attainment could be entirely spurious - being a function of the age of the respondents rather than the other variables.

The effect of the interrelationship of the independent variables can be controlled by using a multivariate form of analysis. The appropriate technique, discriminant analysis, was used to distinguish statistically between Participants and Non-Participants. A stepwise analysis using Wilks' lambda (with default entry removal and tolerance criteria) as recommended by Gondek [23] was used to determine which variables discriminate between Participants and Non-Participants. Thirty-five variables were originally used for the discriminant analysis - all of the basic data variables except for the two income items, which were excluded because of the number of cases for which there was no data (111 for personal income and 128 for family income). Excluding the income variables 250 of the 402 cases were analysed. This reduction in sample size was due to the exclusion of cases with missing values. The bulk of these deleted cases were where respondents answered "don't know" to the item on involvement of neighbours in adult education (N=139).

Twenty of the 35 variables were selected before the default level of Wilks' lambda became non-significant. These variables produced a significant degree of separation between the groups. The discriminating variables fall into seven categories according to their contribution to the discriminant function. These variables, described in terms of the characteristics of Participants are:

1. Highly positive discriminating variables:
   - a level of prior formal education which is at least the equivalent completing the School Certificate.
   - An occupational status of a white-collar worker (professional, managerial, clerical or sales) or a rural worker.
   - Working for some time on Sundays.
   - Having friends or family who participate in adult education.
   - A high social participation score.
2. Highly negative discriminating variables:
   - Being retired.

3. Medium-high positive discriminating variables
   - Perceiving something as a problem, the solution of which will be assisted by adult education.
   - Being more involved than the norm in outdoor sport types of leisure pursuits.
4. Medium-high negative discriminating variables:
   - Cost not being a barrier to participation in adult education.
   - Being more involved than the norm in indoor sports types of leisure activities.
5. Medium-low positive discriminating variables:
   - Residing outside the suburban residential area.
   - Not having some 'other' barrier to participation.
   - Being male.
   - Not perceiving oneself as being too old for adult education.
6. Medium-low negative discriminating variables:
   - Working longer hours on Saturdays.
   - Being over 39 years of age.
   - Having left school before the age 15 years.
   - Being more involved than the norm in solitary sedentary type leisure pursuits.
   - Perceiving neighbours as not being very interested in adult education.
7. Low positive discriminating variables:
   - Not being too tired to participate.

The stepwise selection method used involves sequentially selecting the 'next best' discriminator at each step. This controls for variable interaction as with each new variable selected for inclusion the previously included variables may lose their discriminating power. When this occurs, such variables are redundant and will be eliminated. No variables were removed during the analysis.

The value of Wilk's lambda as each variable is entered represents the proportion of variance between the two groups left unexplained. Three discriminating variables accounted for half of the variance explained. These were prior formal education (13.8% of the variance), participation of friends or family (8.9%), and age (4.3%) with the remaining 17 discriminating variables each accounting for up to three percent of the variance between the groups. The total variance accounted for was 53.3 percent.

These findings can be contrasted with two similar studies. In their re-analysis of NCES data, Anderson and Darkenwald [24] examined eleven independent variables to find that the variables which accounted most for participation were prior formal education and age. The total variance explained by the eleven variables was only ten percent.

Shipp and McKenzie [25] interviewed a random sample of 232 adults and, using discriminant analysis differentiated between 'learners' and 'non-learners'(their definition included involvement in self-directed learning) with a series of nine demographic variables. They found four discriminating variables: occupational strata, educational level, age, and family income. These variables were about equally as powerful as discriminators. The amount of variance accounted for by these variables was eleven percent, one percent, seven percent, and four percent respectively, with the total variance explained being 33 percent.

In the present study the inclusion of variables associated with attitudes, barriers to participation, leisure pursuits, and participation by neighbours, friends and family, has considerably increased the precision with which Participants and Non-Participants can be characterised. This heightened precision makes possible the use of the classification techniques in discriminant analysis (since classification can be used when a set of variables is identified that provide satisfactory discrimination for cases with known group membership). The researchers is then able to predict the likely membership of a group, with an unknown value for the independent variable. Using this approach classification has been applied in this study to differentiate between Would-be-Participants who are more likely to become Participants, and those who are more likely to continue as Would-be-participants, or become Non-participants.

Classification (Table 4) resulted in 85 percent of the known cases being correctly classified, and was about equally correct in classifying Participants (83%) and Non-Participants (87%). The proportional chance criterion [26] established that the probability of an individual being correctly classified by chance was 0.51, and as this was less than the proportion correctly classified (0.85) it provides further evidence of the strength of the discriminant factor.

TABLE 2: Classification Matrix for Participation Status of Community Survey respondents

ACTUAL GROUP	Number of Cases	Predicted Group Membership	
		Group 1 (Participant)	Group 2 (Non-Participant
Group 1 (Participants)	69	57 (82.6%)	12 (17.4%)
Group 2 (Non-Participants)	92	12 (13.0%)	80 (87.0%)
Ungrouped Cases (Would-be Participants)	89	45 (50.6%)	44 (49.4%)

Percent of "grouped" cases classified correctly: 85.09%

For the ungrouped cases (Would-be-Participants) it was predicted that 51 percent (N=45) would participate, with the remainder (49%) being unlikely to participate in adult education.

Having sub-divided the Would-be Participants, the two resulting groups were examined to see if there was a difference between the sub-groups for variables other than those used in the discriminant analysis (i.e. the variables examined here being based upon the items pertaining to adult education, which are the focus of material later in this paper, as distinct from the basic data). There were differences between the sub-groups for seven of these variables. The proportion of those Would-be-Participants who were classified as Participants (compared with those classified as Non-Participants) showed the following characteristics:

they anticipated spending longer periods of time studying - more than two years (86%) and indefinitely (80%);
they had no preference for scheduling (80%) or preferred weekend (67%) scheduling of courses;
they could spend more than six hours learning per week (60%);
they would either not be prepared to spend anything on adult education (71%) or were prepared to spend more than $200(58%)
they regarded topic counselling as being extremely important (69%);
they had an ambition to attain a Higher School Certificate (75%) or some tertiary qualification (83%)
they had previously attended an adult education course within the past 20 years.

Considering the number of cases in the sub-groups (45 for Would-be-Participants classified as Participants, and 44 for those classified as Non-Participants), and the finding that there appear to be no major difference in preferences for adult education within the sub-groups, the unity of the Would-be-Participants groups was maintained for the analyses presented in the following sections. However, had there been a larger number of cases, with fewer being excluded from analysis due to missing values, it may have been worthwhile undertaking a separate analysis of the Would-be-Participants who were predicted as being likely to participate.

EDUCATIONAL PREFERENCES OF NORTH COAST ADULTS

Of the Participants 88.8 percent (79) had future plans for learning. This sub-group of Participants who anticipated further studies, taken together with the Would-be-Participants (146), gave 56 percent (225) of the total sample with plans to be involved in adult education in the subsequent two years. Data were collected to enable an examination of the preference of those intending to participate.

Topics

A comparison was made of interest in topics planned for study and those currently being undertaken.

"Future plans" represents a spontaneous response in an interview situation and, even though care was taken to locate this item sufficiently far into the questionnaire to give respondents an opportunity to think about their learning needs, it does not mirror the real world circumstances of deciding to pursue an interest. Often course enrolments are observed as being in a supply-response situation, where provision by the adult education agency controls the choice. Also, responding to a survey question does not involve making a commitment and so should not be interpreted as being an irrevocable decision.

The overall domination of projected interest in arts and crafts topics was notable. This, along with a consistent demand by Participants for business and commercial, child development, recreational, religious, agriculture and farming, home skills, and nutrition courses, and the proportion of Would-be-Participants interested in building/home repairs/woodwork, agriculture and farming, and nutrition represented the extent of similarity between what was currently being studied by Participants and the intention of all those respondents who had plans to study.

Areas of study in which there was appreciably more interest than the current participation rates were: English language and literature, technical and trade subjects, clerical subjects, computing, and horticulture. There was also marginally more interest in history, social science, current affairs, education, natural science, and alternative medicine. For other topics there was expressed a reasonable level of interest, although none of the respondents was participating in these topics: languages, music, management and law, and community and public affairs. Conversely, there were topics in which fewer Would-be-Participants seemed to be interested than there were Participants currently involved in, namely: child development, sport, recreation, physical fitness, personal development, religion, and first aid/safety.

Ultimately, participation in adult education is a function of supply. If the course in which one wishes to participate is not being offered one cannot enrol in it (that is, unless one happens to be among those whose participation is not determined by the subject matter, but rather by social factors).

It has been noted that 13 per cent of the respondents in the community sample survey did not think adult education courses on offer interested the average person (34% were unsure and 53% thought the courses were of interest). In answer to another question in the survey, 12 per cent of respondents gave one of their reasons for not participating as being, "in this community there are no educational programmes which would interest me". Because of the differences in the profile of topics currently being undertaken from that of topics that are intended to be studied, and the above two indications that about 12 per cent of respondents felt that there was some inadequacy in the courses being offered, it can be concluded that there is a mismatch between what people want and what they are getting in adult education.

SUBJECT FIELD OF FUTURE STUDY

After those intending future participation had identified up to three topics that they planned to study, they were shown a card and asked which of the eight categories best described the topic(s) they planned to study.

The subject field of future study differed from that of current participation in that greater numbers were interested in pursuing topics with both a vocational and a hobby-arts-crafts orientation, and there was less demand for health-family type courses (Table 3). Also a lesser proportion of Would-be-Participants was interested in personal development, and a greater number of Would-be-Participants interested in 'basic education' than are currently reflected in the profile of Participants. Fourteen participants engaged in basic education included seven with a prior level of education of less than three years high school, three who had completed an intermediate certificate or school certificate, three who had completed high school, and one who had done a TAFE course.

TABLE 3: Subject Field of Topics for Participants' Current and Planned Study, and for Would-be-Participants' Planned Study, as a percentge of the Community Survey respondents

SUBJECT FIELD	Participants (N=89)	Participants Anticipating Further Study (N=79)	Would-be-Participants (N=146)
Hobby-Arts-Crafts	21.1	24.9	32.2
Personal Development	20.4	18.4	12.0
Vocational	20.4	25.9	27.6
Health-Family	16.3	12.4	6.0
Community Affairs	6.1	6.5	3.9
Recreation	6.1	4.9	4.6
Farming	4.8	4.9	5.3
Other	2.7	1.6	3.5
Basic Education	2.0	0.5	4.9

Among respondents planning to undertake some course the male/female ratio for hobby-arts-crafts was 1:3, for personal development 1:2, and for health-family 1:5.

The principal subject field (i.e. the subject field of the respondent's most important topic) for Participants and Would-be-Participants was cross-tabulated with 16 basic data variables. Sub-groups which were over-represented in the various subject field categories were:

Personal Development
- single parents

Clerical
- professional, services, managerial

Vocational
- single persons living with parents
- migrants of 10 to 20 years' residence
- respondents with university or College of Advanced Education qualifications
- respondents having left school at 17 years or over
- full-time and part-time workers
- unemployed persons
- craftsmen
- 20 to 39 year olds
- respondents with personal incomes of over $12,000
- men
- respondents residing 10 to 40 kilometres from town

Arts and Crafts
- respondents with a school leaving age of 13 or 14 years
- full-time and part-time workers
- service and clerical workers
- 40 to 49 year olds
- women

Farming and Agriculture

- self-employed respondents
- respondents residing 10 to 40 kilometres from town

Health, Welfare or Family Life
- part-time workers
- unemployed persons
- 20 to 29 year olds

Civic, Political or Community Affairs
- retired persons

The relationship between age and planned study can be compared with adult interest patterns throughout the lifespan as described by Huberman.[26] Data from the community survey concurred with the findings of previous studies that interest in the vocational sphere declined with age, but there was not the marked increase in interpretive/aesthetic (hobby-arts-crafts), nor the drop in civic and social (community affairs) activities found in other studies.[28]

Method

Attendance at regular classes was the most preferred method for both Participants and Would-be-Participants, being four times as popular as the next most preferred method of one- or two-day workshops or conferences. On-the-job training was the third most preferred method for both groups, being preferred by 20 and 26 per cent of those working in each group respectively. Correspondence learning was the only other method which rated highly.

Comparing these findings with the actual methods of attendance found in the Clientele survey indicates that there is greater relative demand for regularly scheduled classes than is being provided for.

Scheduling

A complicated relationship exists between preferred timing of courses, subject matter, and socio-demographic characteristics. In general terms the mismatch in need and provision indicated by comparing current provision with preference was for weekday evening classes for Would-be-Participants, and daytime classes for Participants. Conversely, proportionately more weekend activities are offered than are preferred.

Certification and Credit

It is a common view amongst adult educators that the provision of activities in an atmosphere free from the competitive overtones of

certification is a great strength. However, it appears that consumers of adult education aspire to achieving some form of certification, to the extent that over 40 per cent of both Participants and Would-be-Participants view certification to be of some importance (Table 4).

TABLE 4. Attitude to Certification of Participants and Would-be-Participants, as a percentage of the Community Survey respondents

IMPORTANCE OF CERTIFICATION	Participants (N=89)	Would-be Participants (N=146)
Extremely	14.6	14.4
Very	13.5	9.6
Fairly	12.4	16.4
Not very	21.3	22.6
Not at all	28.2	37.0

The most popular form of recognition desired was a "certificate of satisfactory completion", but there were substantial proportions seeking credit transfer towards a professional or vocational certificate (36% of Participants desiring certification, and 19% of those Would-be-Participants), and credit towards a university degree (17% and 3% respectively).

Counselling

Thirty nine percent of the Participants and of the Would-be-Participants attached some degree of importance to availability of counselling about avenues for furthering their learning. A larger proportion (73% and 62% respectively) viewed as important the availability of advice about the structuring of their learning and access to resources necessary to fulfil their learning needs.

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Lack of time (whether stated outright or attributed to home or job responsibilities) accounted for 39 per cent of the major past barriers overcome by the Participants, 34 per cent of the Participants' current barriers, 25 per cent of the Would-be-Participants' total barriers and 31 per cent of the total barriers for the Non-Participants. Availability of time was the major obstacle to participation, being a problem for 30 per cent of respondents. Cost was recorded as a problem by 12 per cent of the respondents. Other significant barriers were the perception of being too old to learn (9%), the unavailability of suitable courses (4%), and the inconvenient scheduling of courses (4%); the remaining 41 per cent of respondents were distributed amongst 20 other obstacles, each being mentioned by less than four per cent of the sample

The belief that one can be too old to learn was cited as a more important reason for not participating by Non-Participants being the major obstacle for 24 per cent of Non-Participants. Information about adult education activities was a salient problem for Would-be-Participants but not of any concern to the Non-Participants. Transport also appears to be a factor frustrating Would-be-Participants.

Seventy-eight per cent of Participants had overcome some barrier to participation with the remaining 22 per cent not noting any constraints. Current barriers were noted by 61 per cent of the Participants. It is interesting that nine per cent of Would-be-Participants did not identify a barrier to participation - perhaps because they intended pursuing their interest in the next 12 months, having only a temporary reason for not participating. The three per cent of Non-Participants who identified no obstacle were presumably not interested.

A very small percentage of respondents specified answers in the "other" category: evidence of the comprehensive nature of the 30 categories used. Participants mentioned lack of library and tertiary education facilities, lack of motivation, poor health and the unavailability of materials. Would-be-Participants mentioned classes having been full, their having insufficient concentration, adult education not being a priority for them, being too introverted, pregnant or sick, and that the study had to be interesting. For the non-Participants "other" reasons specified were poor health, lack of interest in adult education, a parent, being an invalid, and having a speech impediment.

Barrier analysis incorporates the identification of responsibility for creating and maintaining obstacles. The three categories of individual-centred; provider-centred; and society-centred, are a convenient way of examining the 30 obstacles listed in this study. The obstacles corresponding to each category were:

1. Individual-centred

   - Lack of time for study/lectures
   - Don't know what to learn or what it would lead to
   - Don't want to study full-time
   - Friends or family don't like the idea
   - Home responsibilities
   - Job responsibilities
   - Not enough energy and stamina
   - Afraid that I'm too old to begin
   - Not sure I could handle the course

2. Provider-centred

   - Course duration too long
   - Getting credit towards a degree
   - Strict attendance requirements
   - Courses aren't scheduled when I can attend
   - No information about places or people offering what I want
   - Too much red tape in getting enrolled
   - Don't meet requirements to begin programme
   - Courses I want don't seem to be available

- Don't enjoy studying
- Tired of going to school, tired of classroom
- Poorly organised or presented courses
- Lack of contact with tutors and/or fellow students
- Too far to travel to courses
- Uncertain of the value of the course

3. Society-centred

- Cost of books, learning materials
- Cost of child care
- Cost of transport
- Cost of tuition
- No place to study or practise
- No child care
- No transport

The group of obstacles which represents an individual's disposition, attitudes and preoccupations regarding use of time, their age and self-concept, represents the major group of obstacles. Here the responsibility for change rests largely with the individual (Table 5). Certainly, it can be argued that shorter working hours can increase leisure time, or media campaigns can change attitudes to education held by those who feel they are too old to participate. However, there are still those to whom these individual-centered barriers do not apply (or at least are not admitted), and to whom the inequalities in distribution normally associated with income, access to higher education, or other socio-economic variables are not evident; yet they do not see adult education as a priority for them.

TABLE 5: Sources of Barriers to Participation, as a percentage of the Community Survey respondents

SOURCE OF	Participants	Would-be-Participants (N=146)	Non-Participants (N=167)	Total (N=402)
Individual-centred	43.1	32.8	63.5	50.6
Provider-centred	32.6	31.6	13.8	26.3
Society-centred	22.3	21.9	9.0	18.2
	98.0	86.3	86.3	95.1

Providers of adult education appear to have the responsibility for alleviating about one-third of the obstacles to greater participation for Participants, or improving access for Would-be-Participants. However, providers can have a lesser impact in removing barriers for Non-Participants. Support for adult education in terms of funding, improved facilities, and providing transport, would remove approximately 20 percent of the barriers to participation of those currently involved or intending to be, but is less important for Non-Participants.

MOTIVE ORIENTATIONS

Participants were asked an open-ended question about their reasons for participating. Twenty two categories of response were identified (Table 6), fifteen of which could be readily allocated to the orientations identified by Burgess[29] with the remaining responses being grouped together into an orientation which was labelled: The desire to achieve physical/emotional well-being.

TABLE 6: Motive orientations of Participants and Would-be-Participants

	Participants (N=89)		Would-be-Participants (N=146)	
	Major Reason	All Reasons	Major Reason	All Reasons
The Desire to Know				
Interest in subject	20.2	16.9	17.0	15.2
Compulsive student	5.6	4.4	4.2	3.6
Second chance	1.1	0.6	0.7	0.4
General knowledge	-	-	2.1	2.2
Literacy	-	-	1.4	0.9
Personal development	-	-	5.7	7.6
The Desire to Reach a Personal Goal				
Vocational	23.6	19.4	17.0	15.2
Improve skills	3.4	6.9	8.7	5.8
Certification	-	0.6	2.1	2.2
Financial	-	1.3	1.4	2.7
Refresher	-	1.2	1.4	0.9
The Desire to Reach a Social Goal				
Involvement in community affairs	4.5	2.5	4.3	3.1
The Desire to Reach a Religious Goal				
Spiritual development	1.1	0.6	0.7	0.4
The Desire to Take Part In a Social Activity				
Socialise	3.3	6.9	2.1	4.0
The Desire to Comply With Formal Requirements				
Parental pressure	-	0.6	-	-
The Desire to Achieve Physical/Emotional Well-being				
Personal satisfaction	12.4	12.5	16.3	17.0
Enjoyment	5.6	6.3	1.4	0.9
Keep active	5.6	5.0	13.5	12.9
Recreational	5.6	4.4	-	-
Stimulation	3.4	5.6	-	0.9
Benefit family	2.2	2.5	2.8	3.9
Health	2.2	1.9	-	-

Future Participation

In terms of likely future behaviour, four types of individuals can be identified:

1. Potential Participants - those Would-be-Participants who were classified as Participants plus those Participants who plan further study. This group encompasses 38 percent of the sample.

2. Aspiring Participants - the Would-be-Participants who were classified as Non-Participants (ie, respondents not currently participating but planning to undertake a course in the next two years, and whose profile of attributes is inconsistent with that of the Participants). This group encompasses 18 percent of the sample.

3. Non-Participants - as previously defined. This group, encompassing 42 percent of the sample, is the most numerous group.

4. Discontinuing Participants - those Participants who did not identify any future study plans. Some of the possible reasons for this status are a temporary change in circumstances (eg, overseas travel, pregnancy), the satisfaction of a particular need (which may be a temporary or permanent reason for having no future study plans), or disenchantment with adult education. Two percent of the sample were Discontinuing Participants and, because they are a relatively small group, they have not been included in the following analysis.

Strategies for Increasing Participation

Certain conditions have to be met in order to enable the participation of each of the above groups. These conditions form a hierarchy which can be summarised as follows:

1. Adequate and appropriate provision.
2. Reaching those on the threshold of participation.
3. Positive discrimination towards the educationally deprived.

Adequate and Appropriate Provision

Potential Participants have an expressed demand and a profile which is congruent with the known attributes of Participants. It follows that the availability of appropriate opportunities to learn, offered in a context which suits individual circumstances, sets the first ceiling on participation.

Adequate and appropriate provision includes items such as scheduling, instruction method, opportunities for certification, the removal of provider-centred barriers, and the provision of a suitable counselling service. Appropriate attention to these items alone has the potential of boosting the participation rate to 38 percent from the current 22 percent.

To achieve an adequate level of adult education provision, as defined by the expressed demand, current provision needs to be almost doubled, with expansion in most subject areas.

Part of the process of expanding provision should be the encouragement of employers to provide more on-the-job training, so that this preference can be satisfied.

Roughly one-fifth of the overall provision should take the form of short conferences and workshops. Experimentation with the provision of day-time activities, both in the hobby-arts-crafts subject field and as day-release vocational courses, should be part of an expanded provision.

Certification is a concern for those adults who are interested in vocational type courses and, with half of this group expressing a desire for credit towards a qualification, there is an urgent need to develop and implement a credit transfer system which includes the recognition of short courses.

There are both pragmatic and altruistic reasons for establishing an educational counselling service. On the one hand, such a service would help adults with learning needs to be properly placed in suitable courses, and it would provide a greater awareness of the appropriate opportunities for learning. It would also provide useful information on the learning needs and preferences of adults.

Ideally, a counselling service would not be confined to a recruiting function, but would also encourage self-directed learning by assisting adults to locate resources, plan their own learning, and identify others with similar interests (the learning exchange function).

TAFE Colleges have been recommended as a clearing house for the distribution of information on adult education because they are the institutions most familiar to Participants. However, an overriding concern in establishing a counselling service is that it be accessible to the entire community, not just those already using the services of adult education. For this reason, it is desirable to have a counselling service which is independent of any educational institution, and thereby able to operate in a non-threatening climate.

A corollary of the implementation of the above practices is that they would essentially eliminate the provider-centred barriers to participation.

Reaching Those on the Threshold of Participating

Aspiring Participants have some attributes which are not currently associated with participation. To overcome the negative impact of those factors precluding participation it is necessary to compensate for, counteract, or alter their effects. Because the members of this group are ready to participate, but are restrained by the perception of their circumstances or elements of their socialisation, it would appear to be most practicable to counteract these influences by manipulating those variables which are not part of the individual's personal life-history. Indeed, this can be largely achieved in a ripple effect by fulfilling the first condition, since an

expansion of the numbers participating will in turn mean a greater likelihood of having friends, family or neighbours who participate. This has the dual impact of improving predisposition to participate and, because word of mouth is an important channel for information, it will also improve ability to participate through an increased knowledge of the avenues for adult education.

Building on the notion that education begets education, it is logical to assume that, by somehow exposing the Aspiring Participants to an initial experience, they will be inducted into the role of a Participant. A useful strategy is to provide a bridge to participation through offering activities less likely to be associated with some imaginary prerequisites or with misconceptions about adult education being the province of learned, bookish people. As a strategy to meet the needs of a body of people different from those utilising existing provision, the Committee on Continuing Education at the Open University[30] recommended a range of 'adult concern courses' which should start with a particular well-defined and well-known problem. This Committee also subscribed to the theory that attendance at such a course should trigger off a whole series of connected topics and problems for which the individual may find adult education to be an appropriate avenue for further learning.

The six areas of courses suggested by the Open University Committee are:

1. Addressing the day-to-day problems of dealing with different authorities - housing, taxation, education, social security, employment (eg, individual rights and responsibilities, financial management and taxation, the choice of your child's school, and home improvement).

2. Understanding the rules, procedures and policies of particular authorities and the methods by which they are made accountable (eg, learning to live with local government, how central government affects the individual, and local transport problems).

3. Participating in change, where a 'major issue' arises or where a group is conscious of conflicting priorities (eg, how tenants' associations work, running a local pressure group, and planning your own neighbourhood).

4. Understanding how society affects the individual (eg, young people and unemployment, industrial relations, work and its rewards, problems of a multi-racial society, social implications of science and technology, and resources and the environment).

5. Understanding the individual in society (eg, family relationships in middle life, child development in single-parent families, health: your rights and responsibilities, and the handicapped person in the community).

6. Learning basic educational skills (eg, numeracy, literacy, and communication and study skills).

A further strategy involves counteracting the impact of individual-centred barriers by emphasising the compensating benefits of participation in adult education.

Because this group is perched hesitatingly on the edge of participation, it is difficult to judge whether such minor adjustments will tip the balance and result in a participation rate of 56 percent (that which would be achieved if all Potential Participants and Aspiring Participants were to participate).

Positive Discrimination Towards the Educationally Deprived

An approach to stimulating the participation of Non-Participants can be based on the concept of segmenting the market. Just as Houle[31] noted that 'society contains enclaves of people who support continuing education' there are sub-groups who do not participate in adult education. In the preface to the OECD study of non-participation, it is asserted that careful planning of programmes aimed to meet the needs of specific target groups makes it possible to attract new recruits into adult education, and that to do this it is necessary to 'disaggregate the potential audience'.[32]

Moorhouse[33] suggests that target populations can be identified, either according to a definition of need (eg, for functional literacy programmes, or vocational training), or in terms of categories of people with particular needs (eg, the unemployed, or migrant workers).

Three groups are identified from the discriminant analysis as being appropriate to single out for special attention: retired persons; manual workers (service workers, craftsmen, operatives, transport workers, and labourers, but not rural workers); and those with a level of formal education which is less than the equivalent of the School Certificate. These groups comprise 14, 22 and 34 percent of the sample respectively, with current participation rates of twelve percent, 16 percent and eleven percent.

The last of these three groups was not discrete. Twenty-two percent of those with a prior formal education of less than three years at high school were retired persons and a further 24 percent were manual workers. Of the remaining 72 respondents in the minimal prior formal education group, 71 percent were engaged in home duties. Thus, the third group was redefined as being persons with less than three years of high school who were engaged in home duties, and comprised 13 percent of the sample. This group had a current participation rate of 14 percent.

Relevant characteristics which assist in more precisely describing and understanding these three groups are outlined below:

1. Retired persons. Not all of this group were aged over 60 years, a sizeable proportion (26 percent) being in the 50 to 59 age cohort. A little more than half the retired persons (52 percent) had a level of prior formal education which was less than three years at high school. Seventy-two percent of the retired persons were men. Forty-one percent had no kin in the district and the same proportion were of the opinion that friends and family participated in adult education (cf. 49 percent of the sample and 79 percent of the Participants had friends or family who participated).

Forty-five percent of the retired persons claimed that 'being too old' was a reason for not participating in adult education (this reason was cited by twelve percent of the remainder of respondents) and this reason was the only one that distinguished this group from the rest of the sample as the proportion of retired respondents citing all 'other' reasons was similar to the percentage for the entire sample.

2. Manual Workers had a lower level of formal education (while 21 percent had completed the equivalent of the Higher School certificate, 46 percent had spent less than three years at high school). Half the manual workers had friends or family who participated in adult education, and 57 percent were of the opinion that others in their neighbourhood were interested in adult education. Forty-four percent of the manual workers had undertaken some self-directed learning. Manual workers were also mostly men (72 percent).

   On balance, this group was more positively predisposed to adult education than were the other two. When the reasons for not participating were examined, this group cited similar reasons to those of the rest of the sample for all but two items. Thirty-nine percent of manual workers claimed to be too busy for adult education, and 20 percent felt that there were no suitable programmes available. These proportions can be compared to the 32 percent and eleven percent respectively of the remainder of the sample citing these two reasons. In contrast to the latter reason, 76 percent of the manual workers felt that the publicity given to adult education was inadequate (whereas 63 percent of the remainder of the sample considered publicity to be inadequate).

3. Persons with Less than Three Years' Prior Formal Education who were Engaged in Home Duties. Eighty-three percent of this group had a personal income of less than $4,000 and 60 percent a family income of less than $8,000 (whereas 26 percent of the remainder of the sample had a household income of less than $8,000). All but one of the 51 respondents were women.

   Looking in detail at some of the non-demographic characteristics of this group leads to the construction of an image of isolation and withdrawal from society. The incidence of self-directed learning was less for this group, and a smaller proportion than average were of the opinion that their neighbours, friends, or family participated in adult education.

   A smaller proportion of this group cited lack of time or the unavailability of suitable programmes as reasons for not participating, than did the overall sample. A slightly larger proportion than the remainder of the sample had not given any thought to adult education. This group was more involved in solitary sedentary-type leisure activities and less involved in outings and both indoor and outdoor sports. Social participation of this group was the lowest of the three groups identified as being educationally deprived. A large proportion of the group felt that they were too old for adult education (31 percent compared to 14 percent of the remainder of the sample), and more felt that they could not afford the cost of adult education (16 percent compared to eight percent of the remainder).

FURTHER RESEARCH

This study indicates six areas of further research (listed here in order of decreasing priority):

1. A study of the motivational orientations of current participants in North Coast courses to determine whether the additional factor of a desire to achieve physical and emotional well-being has been correctly identified. Such a study should utilise an instrument which would provide data suitable for factor analysis and for cross-cultural comparisons with the Boshier[34] and Burgess[35] studies. A cross-section of course types and providing agencies should be sampled.

2. Replication of the current study with a larger, national, sample. Any extrapolation of the results of this study would be tenuous, because of the likelihood of regional differences. For such a study, some modifications to the instrument used here would be required. Items need to be added to: (a) identify the health of the respondent; (b) unemployment benefit, old age pension, single-parent benefit, sickness benefit, or an allowance for a disability; (c) assess the respondent's social and educational skills, self-esteem, and awareness of educational opportunities; and (d) identify factors which may limit the respondent's physical and mental energy.

3. A follow-up study of a sample of Would-be-Participants to assess the strength of the prediction of participation by discriminant analysis. This research could usefully include some group interviews, so as to focus on subjective experiences and interpretations as reasons for not participating, in an environment not restricted by the constraints of a questionnaire (with the attendant superimposed definitions and value-laden constructs). Particular attention should be given to respondents whose predicted status of Aspiring Participant is confirmed in order to probe the reasons why their earlier intentions to undertake some study had been subverted. As participation is an instrument for satisfying individually perceived goals, there is a need to determine whether the Aspiring Participant is lacking in motivation or being thwarted by some obstacle(s).

4. Research in which participation is used as an independent variable.[36] There are two areas for such investigation. First, the consequences of participation as against the current preoccupation with examining antecedents. Evaluating the outcomes of participation, especially for members of those groups which have low participation rates, should help an understanding of what adults are gaining from their participation. An example of this type of research is the use of path analysis by Cookson[37] to investigate the effect of participation in adult education on occupational achievement and the adoption of modern business practices.

5. Experimentation with adult education provision and examining the impact on participation. For example, manipulation of fee structures and the subsequent effect on participation has been examined by Boshier and Baker[38] as a means of assessing whether the removal of fees results in the attraction of a different socio-economic group. The implementation of policy changes provides an opportunity for such research.

Expansion of provision, the introduction of a counselling service, and the removal of institutional barriers should be carefully monitored to see whether these changes do have the anticipated effect on participation behaviour.

6. A separate in-depth study to explore the factors influencing the participation of a sample of persons aged over 60 years. Group discussions and life-history research are recommended as approaches. Some preliminary investigations may establish the need to initiate a longer-germ project employing a sequential design to examine the relationship between developmental changes and participation.

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